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TIME.

BY ALICE CARY

What is time, O, glorious Giver,
With its restlessness and might,
But a lost and wandering river
Working back into the light?

Ceaselessly its waves are calling
To our days, that, as they fade,
Through the sunsets still are falling
To its realm of ancient shade.

Man, whatever light is glowing
On its surface, understands
That the waves beneath are flowing
Cold and white with dead men's hands.

Yet, each gloomy rock that troubles
Its smooth passage, strikes to life
Beautiful and joyous bubbles
That are only born through strife.

Overhung with mist-like shadows,
Stretch its shores away, away,
To the long, delightful meadows
Shining with immortal May:

Where its moaning reaches, never,
Passion, pain, or fear to move,
And the changes bring us ever,
Sabbaths and new moons of love.

ALARIC;

OR,

THE TYRANT'S VAULT.

A SICILIAN STORY OF EARLY TIMES.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

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CHAPTER IV.

STRATAGEMS.

When Alaric's thoughts were all given up to death, he resigned himself to his fate without an effort; but in the moment that followed the bowing of his head he thought of Ianthe, and the resolution to live came upon him, and with it came an impulse to his will which gave fresh vigor to his faculties. The fatal points were close upon hss bosom, and in a moment more the tide of his life would be let forth.

"Hold!" he cried, in a tone so deep and startling that the three executioners stopped, and dropped the points of their weapons as though some unseen hand had held them. "The king fears me?" he added, when he saw that the attention of the ruffians had been distracted from their work of blood.

"I know not," replied one of the trio, in a half-savage tone.

"But I know," resumed Alaric. "Were it not so he would not have sent you here to put me to death. But I will not ask you to disobey your master."

"It would benefit you little if you did ask," said the ruffian, with an assuring shake of the head.

"I know your office too well to hope for mercy at your hands," continued the youth, with some show of mystery in his manner; "but ere I die I would confide to your keeping a secret which may not only benefit the king, but which may be the means of advancement to yourselves."

"If you have a secret let us have it, for we have no time to waste."

"It is a secret of the utmost importance to the king. Here—it is all upon this piece of parchment," pursued Alaric, in quick, eager tones. He placed his hand within his bosom as he spoke, and when he drew it forth he added—"Take this to his majesty when I am dead, and bid him look well to the men whose names are therein written. It will serve you a good turn——"

At this moment the leader of the ruffians had advanced to take the parchment which he supposed he was going to receive, and his sword was so carelessly held that our hero, watching his opportunity with a keen eye, caught at it and secured it, and, before the disarmed executioner could fully realize what had transpired, he was laid prostrate upon the pavement with his head almost severed from his body.

Alaric had no fear now. With the heavy sword in his grasp he leaped into a corner, and placed himself upon his guard. The remaining executioners, as soon as they saw the fate of their companion, and realized that the prisoner was armed, sprang upon him with fierce execrations. With a lightning-like movement the youth leaped into the opposite corner, thereby avoiding the thrusts which were aimed at him, and as he turned he dealt the man nearest to him a blow which staggered him. Without waiting for a fresh attack he sprang upon the other ruffian before he had fully recovered himself, and easily slew him. The second man had somewhat recovered himself, and now set upon the youth with wild fury; but the blood was streaming over his face from the wound he had received, and his sight was far from being sure. Alaric glided easily away from his blows, and finally gave him a thrust that placed him beyond the power of further effort.

As soon as the youth saw that his three dark visitors were thus safely disposed of, he caught up the torch and made his way from the dungeon; but ere he had gone far he remembered that his garb might be too easily recognized, and he thought it safe to make some sort of an exchange with one of the fallen men. So he went back, and having taken the dark frock from the second man he had slain, he put it on over his own, and then buckled the broad leathern belt about his loins. To this he suspended the scabbard of the sword he had first taken, and when he had donned the large black cap, he once more left the cell. He remembered the way which he had come, and he followed it back until he had ascended two flights of steps, and reached the entrance to the long corridor, within which stood the guard of whom Hippon had obtained the torch. Here he stopped, for he dared go no further in that direction. An alarm, now that he had reached the ground-floor of the palace, might cost him his life. He saw a narrow passage leading off to the right, and from the direction it took, and the current of fresh air which came through it, he judged that it must lead to the rear court. He entered it, and pressed on, still keeping the torch, which burned with a bright, flaring flame. At some distance he came to a descent of four broad steps, and when he had gone down these the way grew wider; and in a few minutes he came upon a boy, who seemed to be asleep by a low door. The youngster started to a sitting posture as our hero came up to him, and having rubbed his eyes till he fancied he could see, he looked up.

"Minerva save us!" he ejaculated, with a shudder. "Are ye going to kill anybody out here?"

"Not if you keep quiet," replied Alaric, as he passed on. But he hesitated ere he had gone many steps, and turned back. He might press this fellow into some service.

"Look ye, boy," he said, holding the torch so that as little light as possible should shine into his own face, "you belong here, don't you?"

"Yes, master. I'm one of the wine-keeper's boys," replied the little fellow, getting upon his feet.

"And you are well acquainted with the doors and passages hereabouts?"

"Yes."

"You sometimes slip out of a night, when there's nobody to watch you?"

"No, no, master,—I can go into the court when I please."

Alaric cast his eyes about him to see that no one else was near, and then said, in a low, resolute tone:

"I would not willingly harm you, boy, and if you will conduct me in safety from this place no evil shall befall you; but if you hesitate, or refuse, this sword shall——"

"Mercy! mercy! good master!" the fellow cried, clasping his hand in terror.

"Hush!—Make no noise. If you will conduct me safely to the outer court, no harm shall come to you."

"But aren't you one of the king's——"

"Never mind what I am. Will you guide me, or shall I——"

"Mercy!" uttered the boy again, as he saw the point of the sword raised. "Don't kill me. I'll do anything you say."

"Then mark me: Conduct me from the palace as speedily as possible. If you hesitate, or lead me into danger, you shall die on the instant; but if you guide me out as I have said, I will do you no injury. Now what say you—can you do it?"

The boy contrived after awhile to overcome his fright, and when he found that there was no present danger he seemed to reason more calmly; though his look and bearing plainly showed that he feared the stern man who stood by him.

"I can lead you to the rear court," he said, "but the walls are very high, and guards are stationed at every outlet."

"Is there not some door or gate by which I can gain the public street?"

"Good Bacchus!" ejaculated the boy, gazing into his interlocutor's face with wonder. "You must be a new man among the executioners. I thought everybody in Syracuse knew that no possible avenue to the palace was left unguarded."

"Well, well," said our hero, who liked not to stand in the passage, "lead me to the court."

"Then follow me."

"But my torch—I would not have that seen."

ALARIC AND THE WINE-KEEPER'S BOY.

"You may carry it to the end of this corridor, and then we shall be in the open air," said the boy.

Alaric followed him until he stood upon the pavement of the lower court.

"There is the bath," said the youthful guide, pointing to a large structure of white marble, close at hand; "and beyond is the bakery. The wall runs all around, and the posterns are guarded."

"Is there not some private way, to which you can gain the key?" asked Alaric, after he had thrown aside the extinguished torch.

"I don't know of any, sir."

"And how is it about leaving the court at this time of night? What is necessary to enable one to pass the guard?"

"A pass from the chief, who keeps his station in the great hall, where all must go out and come in who leave the palace."

"What's this pass?"

"A ticket of brass."

"And all who go out have one?"

"Yes."

"And if they have such a pass, the guard ask no questions?"

"Not often."

Alaric saw very plainly that he was not free yet, and he might have to resort to some further stratagem ere he could gain the public highways.

"Boy," he said, after he had reflected awhile, "if I let you go now, will you return directly to the place where I found you, and say nothing of having seen me?"

"I will, my master."

"But how may I know that you will do it?"

"I pray that the furies may fly away with me if I tell a lie," replied the boy, earnestly.

Alaric believed, from what he had seen of the lad, that he might trust him—that is, he believed a sense of fear would lead him to hasten back and keep quiet; so he resolved to let him go. First, however, he asked him where the gate was which was most used at night; and the little fellow pointed out a high tower upon the wall, and said the gate was directly under it.

"And now," said our hero, "I want you to remember one thing: If I get safely out all will be well; but if I am detected through your means, I shall most surely see you again."

"Holy Jupiter crush me, and great Vulcan pound me into hot iron, if I ever say a word!" cried the boy, earnestly and devoutly. "If you won't hurt me, I will never speak a word of you."

Alaric let the fellow go, and when he had gone from his sight he turned towards the tower, which he could plainly see looming up against the sky. A walk of smooth pavement led to it, and when he had come near enough to distinguish the gateway, he stopped. He could see the forms of several soldiers lounging about, their bright spear-heads gleaming in the light of the heavy lamp that hung within the arch, and he quickly made up his mind that mere physical force would be of no service there; so he wandered back until he had gained the shelter of a large olive tree, where he stopped to consider. He knew it would be of no use to attempt to scale the wall, for that was built on purpose to resist all such efforts, either from without or from within. Yet he must find some means of escape, and the sooner the better. He judged that it was then not far from midnight, and the guard would be soon relieved.

While he stood thus pondering, he heard footsteps at no great distance, and pretty soon he saw a dusky form approaching from one of the wings of the palace. As the paved walk led close by the tree, he remained still, and watched the coming pedestrian. In a few moments he could see that it was a man, and, in a few more, that it was a servant, as the garb presented no ornament to reflect the starbeams. Alaric's course was quickly resolved upon, and having assured himself that no one else was approaching, he stepped out to the side of the walk just as the stranger came along.

"A fair evening," said our hero, stepping to the edge of the walk.

The man stopped and gazed at the speaker. He was a middle-sized person, and, from his garb, appeared to be a servant in the purveyor's department.

"Are you going out?" Alaric continued.

"Of course I'm going out," returned the serving-man, rather huffily. "I hope the king hasn't placed his deathmen over us for guards."

"Not at all," responded Alaric. "But, if you will listen a moment, I can give you a piece of news that may make your fortune."

"Eh? A fortune?" echoed the fellow, forgetting that his companion wore the garb of a common executioner.

"Yes. Have you a pass?"

"Of course I have. I shouldn't be on my way in this direction without it." And as the man spoke he drew a triangular plate of brass from his pocket.

"Are you going out on business, or merely for pleasure?"

"For pleasure, of course. One needs pleasure after lugging provisions all the day long."

"Will you be out long?"

"Till daylight."

"Then you will have plenty of time. Come this way—beneath this tree—and I will tell you the secret. But you will not divulge it."

"You can depend upon me."

"If it yield thee not more than a thousand broad pieces of silver, and a full purveyor's office, then I'll quit the palace myself," said Alaric, as he saw the fellow hesitate.

At this the man started up, and in a few moments stood beneath the olive tree.

"Now what is it?" he asked.

"Dost see where yonder star almost touches the top of the temple?" said the youth.

"Aye," responded the other, gazing in the direction pointed out.

And while he yet gazed at the star, Alaric gave him a blow upon the ear that felled him to the earth, and without loss of time, he drew his sword and knelt upon his breast.

"Breathe but a single word, and thou art a dead man!" the youth said, in a tone which carried conviction with it.

"Don't murder me!" gasped the fallen man. "What is it? What mean you?"

"Only for you to keep perfectly quiet, and obey me," responded Alaric, with the point of his sword at the fellow's heart. "If you make no attempt to thwart me, you shall be free from all harm. Let me bind this scarf over your mouth."

The purveyor's man made some objection, but the unmistakable manner in which the sword was presented to his bosom soon brought him into subjection, and he suffered himself to be gagged. Alaric then made him exchange clothes with him, for he wished not to venture into the streets habited in the blood-marked garments he now wore; and when this was done he possessed himself of the brass ticket, and concealed his sword beneath his new frock. Thus prepared he took one more look at the prostrate man, and when assured that all was safe in that quarter he started for the gate. He pulled the long locks of hair well over his temples; drew the cap down over his brow, and walked boldly to the post of the guard. He made a trivial remark about the lateness of the hour as he exhibited his pass, and the sentinel, who seemed to be waiting anxiously for the relief guard, simply glanced at it, and gruffly bade him pass on.

In a very short time Alaric was in the public street, and without stopping long to consider, he hurried on. He remembered the way from the palace to the quarter where Bellerus lived, and he concluded to seek the old mason's residence first, trusting that, if necessary, he would thence find some place of concealment. He was resolved to get out of the city as soon as possible, and take Ianthe with him, knowing that upon the shores of Greece he could find a home where peace and joy might be his. He had forgotten the startling thought which had been called to his mind at the Hermit's Cave; or, if it still dwelt in his memory, the thought of happiness with his beloved overcame it. He had seen enough of Syracuse to assure him that, while Pyrrho sat upon the throne, there could be no peace for him within its walls. Had he returned to his native city for vengeance alone he might have felt differently; but he came for love, and he willingly sought no strife.

Swiftly the youth hurried on, avoiding the few people who yet remained in the streets, and keeping his features hidden as much as possible. He would find Bellerus, and at once secure a place of safe retreat from the myrmidons of the tyrant whom he was convinced would be ere long pursuing him.

CHAPTER V.

ROYAL PERPLEXITY.

Pyrrho had determined that he would not retire until he had heard the final account from his prisoner.

"Donatus," he said, to his chamberlain, who was alone with him, save the twelve black slaves who stood behind the throne, "I have strange presentiments in connexion with this youth, Alaric. I speak freely with you, because I know that the hour which sees me fall must also witness your demise."

And the king spoke truly here. He felt sure of the faith of his chief officers only because their fates were inseparably linked with his own. They had become so obnoxious to the people that the power of the throne, and fear of the royal vengeance, alone kept the hand of vengeance from them. Full well did the royal chamberlain, and the chief jailer, and the captain of the guard, and all the centurions know, that if Pyrrho should fall they would most assuredly fall with him. And so they were bound to him by the very tie of their own lives.

"You may be sure of my honor, sire," replied Donatus, "without the spur of fear. Yet I know we stand or fall together."

"I thought not of questioning your loyalty," good Donatus. "It was a mere passing thought, and I gave it utterance. But of this Alaric: I have old recollections, old dreams, old presentiments called up by his presence."

"Yet your majesty will soon be rid of them."

"How so?"

"The youth must be dead ere this, if the executioners perform their work as they usually do."

"I know. Those stout villains are men of few words. Their swords are more ready than their tongues. But it is not alone of this youth that my thoughts are troubled. Years ago there was some whisper of Bellerus, at whose house this Alaric was found. I was only a general then, and Glaucus was king. Had I been king I might have followed it out. I have had the old mason watched, but nothing has appeared against him. All his ingoings, and outgoings are of the most seemly character. But this event has revived the doubts, and I mean to fathom them."

"I remember something of this, sire," said the chamberlain, thoughtfully.

"Ah—do you?"

"Yes. I call it to mind now."

"Can you remember any particular?"

"Let me think. Aye—I have it now. It was while Glaucus was trembling on his throne through fear of his general, Basilus. The craftsman, Bellerus, in company with some of his fellows, said, that he *might live to see the time when a word from his lips would empty the throne of Sicily, and fill it anew.*"

"Aye, Donatus, thou art right," cried the king. "I remember now. And I remember that some importance was given to the man's saying at the time; though, if I remember right, he declared most solemnly that he spoke only in jest."

"It was so," replied the chamberlain; "and there the matter rested."

"And there it may rest for the present," added the king. And thus speaking he turned towards the small door by the throne and clapped his hands. A page entered at the signal, and Pyrrho bade him go and call the chief jailer.

"Come, come, Hippon," the monarch said, addressing that official as he entered, "it is high time thou brought'st a report from the executioners."

"I have been waiting for them, sire."

"Have they not had time to do their work?"

"Plenty."

"Then seek them, and bring me word."

The jailer hurried from the royal presence, and when he was gone the king began to walk to and fro with nervous steps.

"Thou art troubled, sire," spoke Donatus, as he watched Pyrrho's changing countenance.

"Aye—I am troubled," was the quick response. "I feel not as I would wish to feel. Doubts and fears are hanging about me like bad dreams."

"And are they not mere dreams, after all?"

"I don't know." The king strode hastily across the wide apartment several times, and then he stopped and added—

"I tell thee the earth is fervid beneath our feet, and at the least opening the volcano might burst forth. Donatus," he continued, seizing the chamberlain by the hand, and gazing eagerly into his face, "why should you and I try to hide the truth from our own comprehension. I tell thee again—the air is hot in Syracuse, and at times I feel it burn as I breathe it. We must be wary and prompt. If there be those upon whom suspicion can rest,—no matter how slightly—they must be put from off the face of the earth! Dost comprehend?"

"Aye, sire; and most fully do I agree with thee."

"I'll keep my eyes open, Donatus, and if the earth shows a disposition to heave in any one spot, upon that spot the sword shall be laid!"

"Right, sire. I know how suddenly a great fire can grow from one chance spark."

"And we'll put those sparks out. Blood is an excellent thing with which to quench them!"

At this point the jailer returned. He came in without ceremony, and his face was pale, and his body trembled.

"How now?" cried the king, as soon as he saw the officer's strange agitation. "Speak! What has happened?"

"The prisoner has escaped!"

"Fool! I spoke of the youth, Alaric."

"And of him I speak," returned Hippon.

"But *he* has not escaped?"

"Yes, sire."

"Now, by the gods, thou liest! Thou did'st tell me he was safely lodged within the deepest dungeon of the palace; and from thence mortal man ne'er yet escaped!"

"But, sire," cried the jailer, "let me explain. The prisoner has hewn his way over your executioners. He has slain them all three, and thus passed out."

"But he had no weapon."

"He must have first disarmed one of the executioners, for the chief of the trio had been stripped of his sword, and another of his raiment."

"Is this true?" asked the king, grasping his jailer by the shoulder.

"Just as I have told thee, sire."

"And what have ye done?"

"I have started the guards through every avenue of the palace, and sent some to the court."

"Then haste thee away and bring me intelligence of the result. He cannot have passed the guard, and so he cannot have left the palace."

Hippon left the royal presence, and when he was gone the king turned to his chamberlain.

"Now by the fires of Tartarus!" he cried, smiting his hands together, "this exceeds all belief. Did you ever hear of such a thing?"

"Never, sire."

"To kill three of my executioners! To rob that gigantic villain of his sword! By the crown of Jupiter, he has the hiss of the volcano in him. But he cannot have escaped."

"I should think not, sire."

After this the monarch paced to and fro across the apartment, and finally sank down upon the base of one of the pillars by the throne, where he remained until the jailer returned.

"Ha, good Hippon," he cried, starting to his feet, "have ye secured him?"

"No, sire. He has fled from the palace."

"Out upon thee for a liar, now! He could not have fled. My walls no mortal can overcome, and my guards are incorruptible!"

"Let me speak, sire," urged Hippon, trembling with apprehension. "The prisoner has used a most curious stratagem to accomplish this. Beneath the old olive tree, near the bath, we found a servant of the purveyor, named Osephus. He was bound hand and foot, and a firm stop was put upon his mouth. He told us, when we had set him free, how a man, clad in the habiliments of an executioner, set upon him and knocked him senseless upon the earth, and then bound him and gagged him, and robbed him of his garments and his pass, and then made off. Upon going to the gate we learned that a man, wearing the garb of the purveyor's servitor, had passed out about half an hour before."

"Have ye sent for him?" demanded the king, grinding his teeth with rage.

"Yes, sire. I have not order out——"

"'Tis well," interrupted Pyrrho, striding across the apartment, and striking a bell which hung by one of the hidden doors. In a moment, the captain of the royal guard made his appearance.

"Claudian," spoke the monarch, "did'st see the prisoner, Alaric, who was brought hither this night?"

"I did, sire," replied the captain.

"Then mark me well. He has escaped. Select the swiftest and surest of thy men, and send one to each of the gates, with this order to the guard:—That no person be allowed to leave the city, upon any pretext whatever, till further orders. And if, at any gate, a man has passed out within the last hour, who was not well and surely known, have swift pursuers put upon his track. Hasten with this, and send your lieutenant hither as you go."

With a quick step the captain left the royal presence, and presently the lieutenant entered.

"I think," said the king, turning to his chamberlain, "that the youth may have gone direct to the house of Bellerus."

"Very likely he may have stopped there for a while," returned Donatus; "but I should hardly think he would remain there."

"At all events, I shall send for him there, and I'll have all in the house arrested and brought hither."

"But, sire, be careful."

"Of what?"

"Of this Bellerus. The more I think of him, the more I fear him."

"Fear so humble a man?" muttered the king, half to himself.

"There may be reasons for it. But still we should arrest him, though it might be carefully done. We may solve all our doubts if we can but have him in our power awhile."

"But where can be the harm, supposing we arrest and execute him?"

"Why, look ye, sire: He is one of a large class of which we know but little. I have heard it said that the craftsmen of our city—the cunning artificers and the sturdy workmen—all, of both high and low degree—from the chief architect to the hewer of stone and the bearer of burdens—are bound together by mystic ties; and that it is a holy fraternity."

"I have heard of such a thing," returned Pyrrho, "but I gave it no credence. Think you there is reason in the rumor?"

"I think there may be, sire. I have heard that they worship an unseen Deity—that they acknowledge but one God, whom they call Jehovah, and that they hold his name in such veneration that they will not pronounce it save in sanctified places."

"Why—such is the name of an Eastern deity," said the king. "A nation called Israel worship such an one."

"Aye," responded Donatus, "and these craftsmen have surely brought the worship hither."

"Then, by the Fates, we must have the old mason here. I would examine him."

"But be cautious, sire. We know not who may be his friends, nor how much stir his arrest and punishment might make."

"I will use all caution, Donatus, and if this organization have an existence in our midst, I must know it. What, ho, there.—Fingal!"

The lieutenant approached the king, and bowed his head.

"Thou didst arrest the youth at the house of Bellerus," said Pyrrho.

"I did, sire."

"You knew he had escaped?"

"Yes. The captain told me so."

"Then take a strong guard and make all haste to that same house, and find Alaric if you can. If he has been there, and is gone, then send all whom you may find in the house hither under suitable guard, and lay upon his track till morning. Be quiet about it, and make as little show as possible."

With this the lieutenant turned away, and the king and his chamberlain were once more alone. The monarch paced up and down the apartment for some moments, and when he finally stopped, he placed his hand upon the shoulder of his companion, and looked him earnestly in the face.

"Donatus," he said, "I have an idea—one that I have long been in need of. By the horns of Pan, but I'll be my own executioner henceforth!"

"How so, sire?" asked the chamberlain, in surprise.

"I'll tell thee when the time comes. Thou knowest the old vault in the closet beyond my private bath?"

"Yes."

"And what think you it was built for?"

"I always supposed some previous king must have digged for water there. It is very deep, is it not?"

"Aye—as deep as darkness itself. By the gods, it is a glorious thought!"

And for a while the king almost forgot the flight of his prisoner in the new and strange idea which had presented itself to his mind.

CHAPTER VI.

ONE IS SAVED; BUT WHERE IS THE OTHER?

Alaric reached the door of Bellerus's dwelling in safety, but he hesitated ere he knocked for admittance. He supposed, as soon as his escape was discovered, that search would be made for him there, and for awhile he thought of seeking elsewhere. But upon deliberating further, he thought it safe enough just to let the old man know of his situation, and, perhaps, seek his aid in gaining a final escape. So he thumped upon the hollow post, and in a few moments Bellerus made his appearance.

"How? Back so soon?" cried the artisan, as he beheld the youth.

"Hush!—Speak not too loudly here," quickly returned Alaric, gliding into the narrow hall. "I have come back with a thousand times more danger at my heels than I had when I left. Let us seek your closet, and there I will tell you more."

Without further question the old man led the way to an inner apartment, where Ianthe speedily joined them. She had not been able to sleep, and the first sound of her lover's voice had brought her from her chamber. She hastened to his side, and looking up into his face, she murmured—

"Thou wilt not think it unseemly that I should be thus forward; but O, my beloved, when they took thee away I was sore afraid, for full well I knew the cruelty of him who had sent for thee. O—after so many years—when our love was just beaming into full light—it would have been—— But—thou art pale, my beloved. Thy hand trembles. Is there danger still? O, tell me!"

"Sweet one," cried the youth, pressing the fond maiden to his bosom, and then gently putting her away into a seat, "I will tell thee all, and then we can consider. But I must be brief, and we must be cool and deliberate when I am done."

And thereupon Alaric related the adventures which had befallen him since he went to the royal palace. He told the story in as few words as possible, but he told it all, just as it had happened.

"And now," he added, when it was done, taking Ianthe by the hand, "surely there can be no more safety for me here. Will it not be better for us to leave Sicily forever?"

"Yes, yes," cried the maiden, throwing her arm about his neck. "We will go, and my father shall go with us."

"We can find a bright and peaceful home upon the shores of Greece. In Corinth there is a sweet vale, where the sun is bright, and where the flowers live through all the year. My ambition is all of love, and thou art my chiefest hope. I have seen enough of turmoil in my day, and I love it not."

"But suppose you could be king of Sicily?" said Bellerus, in a light, jesting tone—a tone so totally out of place on the occasion, that even he noticed it as soon as he had spoken, and quickly added, "Would you not wear the sword for the good of your country?"

"Aye—most gladly," replied the youth. "But, alas! I have not the power. If my unhappy country is ever freed from the yoke of bondage she now bears, it must be by the hand of some more favored child of fortune. You will go with us, father?"

The old man gazed from Alaric to the maiden, but he made no reply.

"I know he will go," said Ianthe. "He loves me, and would not see me miserable. Wherever thou goest, Alaric, I will go; and where thy home is, there shall Ianthe find her abiding-place. Even upon the verge of Elysium I would cling to thee, if thou couldst not enter the blessed abode. I know my father will go."

Bellerus arose from his seat and started across the room. He was in deep perplexity, and his head was bowed in thought.

"Alaric," he said, stopping and placing his hand upon the youth's shoulder, "we must speak of this at some other time. We could not leave the city to-night if we would."

"And why not?" asked our hero. "Why not pass out at once, before any alarm has been given of my escape?"

"Ah—there will be no alarm given at all," returned the old man, with a shake of the head. "Our king is not fond of creating alarms—he does not consider it good policy. His first movement, upon learning of your escape, will be to send an order to every gate forbidding any one to pass out. That may have been done even now, so that to attempt to leave the city would only be to rush upon the surest danger."

"You may be right," admitted Alaric, upon reflection.

"I know I am right. And now, the next thing is to find a place of present safety, which cannot be here, of course. Yet I can conduct you to a place where Pyrrho and all his myrmidons shall search in vain for you; and when you are once there, we can then make such arrangements for the future as circumstances may warrant. And the sooner we seek such a retreat the better. Ianthe will be safe here until I return."

"But why may I not go with him?" pleaded the maiden.

"That cannot be. It is no ordinary hiding-place to which I shall take him, and thou couldst not gain entrance, even though a friendship greater than mine asked it for thee. But I will not be long gone, and when I return thou wilt have the satisfaction of knowing that Alaric is safe."

Ianthe quickly saw that she might stand in the way of her lover's escape if she resisted further, so she bade her father make all possible haste. Then she turned to Alaric, and rested upon his bosom for a few moments. She finally kissed him, and tried to appear cheerful as she turned away.

"Bar the door when we are gone," said Bellerus, "and should any one chance to come, tell them I shall return very shortly. If you are asked whither I am gone, say that you do not know."

"But suppose the king's soldiers should come, and ask if Alaric had been here?"

"Then tell them boldly that he has, and that he went away again. They can guard the house until I return, and then search it if they wish. But I will not give them much time for troubling you."

Had the old artisan thought less of Alaric, he might have thought more of Ianthe, and taken some different step, though he could then think of nothing which he could do for her additional safety. He must go with the youth—that was a plain duty—and he could not take her with him; so what was he to do but leave her? However, he did not apprehend danger on that score, so he turned all his thoughts upon our hero. He heard the outer door barred behind him, and then he stepped quickly into the street, followed close by the fugitive from royal vengeance.

"Now," said Bellerus, as they turned from the dwelling, "we must hasten with all due speed, for I would return before the soldiers, if any be sent, can reach my house. We have not far to go."

"But you do not think Ianthe can be in any danger," returned Alaric, uneasily.

"No, I do not. If the guard should chance to come, they would wait until I returned, for I do not mean to be long gone. Be under no apprehension on her account. If we can provide for your safety we shall accomplish enough."

They had reached a point where the street branched off to the right and left, the first branch leading in a circular way towards one of the main gates, while the other was narrower, and soon became lost in circuitous, dubious passages. The former was the nearest, and the old man took it, keeping well under the shade of the buildings, and moving along at a swift pace. Presently they came to an open square, within which was a public fountain, and here they found the moonbeams breaking in upon them. It was past midnight, and the moon, which was waning in size, had just arisen above the walls.

"This will make it lighter than I could wish," said Bellerus, "but we'll push on."

He had hardly spoken when quick, loud footsteps were heard upon the pavements at no great distance. They stopped, as if by a mutual instinct, and listened.

"Which way are they coming?" asked Alaric.

"I think from yonder avenue," replied Bellerus, pointing to the left.

"It sounds to me differently," said the youth. "Surely they are off here," pointing to the right. So they listened again.

"It is the echo deceives you," remarked the mason, bending his ear to the ground.

"It may be," admitted Alaric, "for, to tell the truth, I cannot now assure myself. First they sound in this direction, and then in that."

"I think they are to the left," added Bellerus, with assurance, "so we had better keep on. We have but a few steps to go beyond the square."

With this the two friends pursued their way with a quicker step. They had crossed the open place, and were upon the point of turning into a street which led off towards the great northern tower of the city wall, when they stopped again, for the echoing steps were now plainly enough to be heard directly ahead of them.

"If these are soldiers, we are in the lion's mouth," said Bellerus.

"Let us keep on," returned Alaric. "It may be worse if we turn back."

"We cannot well turn back."

They were just starting to cross the street when they were met by the king's lieutenant, Fingal, with a guard of three men. It was too late to avoid them, and they moved on as if nothing had happened to disconcert them.

"Hold!" ordered the officer.

"What shall we do?" whispered the old artisan, stopping, and turning to his companion.

"Are they after me, think you?" the youth asked.

"They must be. That is Fingal, one of the lieutenants of the royal guard. He is after some one, or he would not be here with those men."

"I shall defend myself to the last," said Alaric. "An arrest is sure death for me. I will die here first. You have no arms?"

"None."

"Then leave them to me. If I fall——"

"But," interrupted the old man, "let me consider."

"What time have we for that? See!"

As our hero spoke, the lieutenant had advanced with his men, and now stood only a few feet off. The moonlight lay full upon the place, and the two parties had no difficuly in distinguishing outlines plainly.

"Thou art Bellerus," the officer said, gazing sharply upon the old man.

"I am," replied the latter. He trembled as he spoke, for he began to realize the full force of the position in which he was placed. Alaric noticed the quivering of his frame; and, though the lieutenant had addressed him, yet he paid no attention to it, but determined first to speak with his friend. So he glided close to Bellerus's side, and whispered in his ear—

"Speak—answer me truly! For your own sake, would you have me deliver myself up without resistance?"

"No! no!" replied the artisan, with sudden energy. "I am as nothing. Thou art all here. Thy fate alone hangs upon the issue of this meeting!"

"Enough!" cried Alaric. And then he turned towards the officer.

"Art thou deaf and dumb?" shouted the latter, in a tone of vexation.

"No. I can hear very plainly," returned the youth, "and you see that I can speak."

"Then why do you not answer me? I asked thee if thou wert not Alaric."

"No matter who or what I am."

"Aye—but it does matter, for I think thou art one whom I seek. Thou canst not hide thy face, if thy name is denied."

"I never denied my name, sir. I only doubt your right to question me."

"So, so," muttered Fingal, drawing his sword, and taking a step forward. "Let me tell thee that I have authority and power, and that I have come to arrest thee. You will suffer yourself to be bound by these men, and you shall then know my further pleasure."

At this the three soldiers advanced, but Alaric stepped back, and put forth his hand. They stopped at the motion, for there was an air of command in it which they instinctively recognized.

"Allow me to speak one word," the youth said. "I wish to be quiet and peaceable; and I shall be so if you pass on and leave me to myself. I mean no harm to any living thing, nor will I suffer harm to myself if I can help it. You, sir, know that I have been once to the royal palace."

"Aye—and I know the method of thy escape," replied Fingal.

"Then thou knowest for what thy master wants me now. Say—dost thou not?"

"I can imagine, as thou can'st."

"And think ye I will go willingly to the shambles? Thou knowest the tyrant seeks me only that he may take my life. Now I tell thee, sir lieutenant, that, if I am permitted, I will go in peace from Sicily; but I will not willingly lay my head beneath the executioner's sword. If thou hast the heart to do a right thing let me go."

"Fool!" cried the officer, "dost think I am a child to do my duty thus?"

"No—I thought thou might'st be a man, and as such I addressed thee."

"I am a man, and an officer; and as an officer I must do my duty. I trust that we shall not be called upon to use force."

"I trust thou wilt not attempt it," returned our hero, at the same time drawing forth the heavy executioner's sword, which had been concealed beneath his frock.

"How!" exclaimed the lieutenant, in surprise, as he saw this movement. "Would ye offer resistance to the king's guard?"

"Ye know what I did to the king's executioners," was the quick reply. "If I go to the palace I go to die. I prefer to die here. But, beware—for, by the gods, I shall give thee hot work, and plenty of it!"

Fingal had been too long a soldier, and had performed too often the duties of his present office, to hesitate before a single arm. He turned to his men, and ordered them to arrest the youth.

"Come thou first," cried Alaric.

"By the Furies, I will!" returned the lieutenant. And as he spoke he rushed upon Alaric, and aimed a furious blow at his head. The youth was almost sorry for the opportunity thus offered him, for he could not refuse the advantage, and yet it seemed a cruel work to take life so easily. He only stepped aside from the mad blow, and, at the same time, drove his sword home beneath his opponent's left arm. Fingal staggered back and fell as he was shaken off, and at this moment the three soldiers set upon the youth in a body.

"By the Lost Word!" muttered Bellerus to himself, "this must not be. If we leave none of these fellows to tell the tale of their death, the king may find out the doers as best he can. The boy must not die!"

He seized the sword of the fallen officer while he spoke, and on the next instant he was at work. He handled the weapon as one who knew its use, and he brought to its service a set of thews and sinews of more than ordinary power. At the first sweep he clove a head in twain, from crown to chin, and then sought Alaric's side. The youth had just severed one neck almost in twain, and the remaining soldier turned half away, as though he would flee; but he was not to get away so easily. The stout craftsman had gone into the work upon compulsion, and he meant not that one should escape to condemn him; so he sprang upon the turning soldier, and, with one blow, laid him upon the pavement.

"I think the work is done," he said, throwing the bloody sword which he had used down by the side of its rightful owner; "and now let us make all haste. I think these were not all the guards who were sent out, and I would get back to my house before any reach there."

"I am ready," replied Alaric, returning his own sword to its sheath. "We may leave these fellows without fear, for they can tell no tales."

"Of course they are all dead," added Bellerus, hesitatingly.

"It will take but a moment to see."

An examination was held, and the four men were found to be utterly dead; and then the artisan started up and moved quickly on his way. Ere long he reached the paved court of a magnificent structure, before which he stopped.

"This is the Temple of Diana," said Alaric, gazing up at the white columns.

"I know it," was the laconic reply.

"But you do not stop here."

"Be surprised at nothing you may now see. Follow me, and fear no danger."

Thus speaking, Bellerus led the way to the inner colonnade, thence across the ground-floor of the temple, and when he stopped it was within a close apartment, from which all light was excluded.

"Alaric," spoke the old craftsman, in a deep, solemn tone, at the same time taking the youth by the arm, "I am about to stake my own life for your honor and secrecy; and before I do so I will ask one simple pledge from you in return. You must never allow a word to escape your lips of your having been within this temple. Will you, if necessary, give up your own life rather than have the secret drawn from you?"

"I will," answered Alaric; and he shuddered with a strange awe as he spoke, for there came to him a memory of some mystic tie that had bound his father to the humble craftsmen of the city; and he now remembered that four stout hewers of stone had borne him from the scene of blood on the fatal night when his kindred were slain.

"It is well," responded Bellerus. "You must now suffer me to blindfold you, for such are our laws. I will remain with you while you are in darkness."

Alaric offered not a word in objection. The thought that his humble friend could enter the great temple of Diana, and be master of its mysteries, so filled his mind with wonder that he hesitated not to trust his further power. The old man bound a scarf firmly over his eyes, and then led him on. The youth knew that he passed through large halls, and through winding passages; and ever and anon they were stopped by sentinels, with whom Bellerus whispered a few hurried sentences, and then passed on. Finally their way was down—down long, winding steps—then across a smoothly paved floor, and at length they stopped, and the bandage was removed from Alaric's eyes. He found himself in a vaulted chamber, the roof supported by pillars of the purest marble; the walls composed of porphyry, jasper, and epidote, while the floor was of a curious mosaic pavement, surrounded by a tesselated border of great beauty. Comfortable divans were placed by some of the columns, and upon one side was a marble table, or altar, upon which were various kinds of refreshments.

"Here thou wilt be safe," said Bellerus; "and here thou wilt remain until I see thee again. Ere long a brother will wait upon thee, and assist thee as thou mayest need. All that is strange shall be explained upon some fitting opportunity. At present thou canst find relief in the thought that thou art safe. I must now hasten away, for Ianthe must not be in danger."

"Aye—go to her at once," replied Alaric. "I shall trust myself here with perfect confidence."

"Then fare thee well for the present. Thou wilt not be long alone."

And with this Bellerus turned away and left the apartment. He opened and closed many doors, and passed through many strange places; and he met armed men at certain points, but a simple word and sign served him for a passport. Finally he gained the street in the rear of the temple, and at once hurried on towards his house. He reached it, and found the door of the vestibule open. He entered, and called Ianthe; but he received no answer. He procured a light, and hastened to the maiden's apartments, but she was not there. Thus he went all over the house, and he knew that he was alone beneath the roof!

"My God!" he cried, sinking down upon a stool, and covering his face with his hands, "if she has fallen into the hands of the king, woe is me! And if he reads the story, which I fear her features too plainly tell, woe is to us all!"

The old man fairly staggered as he arose to his feet, so great was the weight of fear and terror which had come upon him.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

POISONED ARROWS.

Many reports have been heard of poisoned weapons, in different countries; and many persons have wholly discredited them, or pronounced them exaggerated. Perhaps the most remarkable are those relating to some of the Indians of New Granada, especially some of the tribes near the Atrato river, formerly called the Chaco, and Darien. The following are some of the accounts we have received from intelligent friends who have traveled in that part of South America, and most of whom were natives of the country. We may, however, first revert to some of the earliest reports of poisoned arrows in that region, which we find in accounts written by the Spanish discoverers.

The first party of Spaniards who attempted to penetrate into the country near the western side of the mouth of the Atrato, proceeded some distance without discovering a single human being. While wondering what could have become of the inhabitants, they were suddenly assailed and some of them wounded by a flight of arrows, which came from some unseen foe, and fell from some place above them, in the air. The wounds soon assumed a threatening appearance, and in a short time proved fatal. They tried every remedy in their power, it would seem, for they found the only effectual one was to burn the wound deep with a red-hot iron as soon as possible. They were not long in discovering that their enemies were concealed among the foliage of the trees, in vast forests around them, and that there they had their habitations. They thus proved to be a very formidable foe; and it is remarkable that that nation of Indians has never been subdued till this day. They are of so independent a spirit, so jealous of foreigners, (in consequence of the inhumanity and treachery with which the Spanish conqueror generally treated the natives,) that they have retained their own power, manners and customs, being greatly protected by the natural strength of their mountainous country. The same is true of all the Indians dwelling between the Atrato and the Pacific Ocean, a considerable distance below the Isthmus of Panama. Lieutenant Strain, in his perilous and suffering expedition across that region, had bitter experience of the obstacles presented by nature, and of the universal unwillingness of the Indians to facilitate the passage of foreigners through their territory. They possess some admirable qualities; particularly, as is affirmed, frankness in speech and strict adherence to their word. No means could be found to persuade them to promise provisions or guides to Strain's party. They declared that they would not comply with the requests made, but they would not annoy or impede, much less destroy, any of them. In all these respects they fulfilled their word, to the letter, during the three months in which that expedition was subject to the unexampled sufferings which they endured, to the loss of so many of their lives.

As for the poisons used by them and other South American tribes upon their arrows, there are said to be several, of distinct kinds, the most fatal of which is obtained from a peculiar species of frog, in a very strange manner. The stories about the origin of this poison, as well as of its deadly effects, are entirely discredited by some persons who have visited the country, as well as by many medical and scientific men, who incline to rank them with many other extraordinary reports from different regions, which naturally gain currency among the credulous. But, on the other hand, men of superior intelligence, study and observation have given us assurance of the truth of the accounts which we are now to lay before the reader.

The deadly poison referred to is obtained from a humor which exudes from the little frog; and the natives commonly expose the frog to the heat of a fire, to make it shed it from its pores, at their pleasure. They dip the points of their arrows in the deadly fluid, and dry them. Then, laying them carefully by, they are always ready to employ them in destroying whatever animals they cannot readily kill with other weapons. They seldom use them against men, for they have no wars, and are naturally pacific, while unmolested. A very intelligent and trust-worthy South-American friend has assured us, that he has seen large birds fall dead, almost instantly, when struck by a Choco Indian with a small poisoned arrow, and that they are certainly equally fatal even to the largest and most ferocious wild beasts, as the jaguar, or tiger of that continent.

We have also heard, from very good authority, of the fatal effects of that poison on a young Hollander, who accompanied a Dutch official person to New Granada a few years since. He had procured some of the poisoned arrows to take to Holland as curiosities, and endeavored to use all necessary precautions in handling them. But while exhibiting one to some gentlemen one day at the dinner-table, he accidentally dropped it, and it made a slight wound in his foot. Swelling immediately commenced, all remedies within reach proved ineffectual, and he died in a very short time.

There is a very popular antidote in that country, which is resorted to on all occasions, and reported to be a certain cure for poisons of all kinds. This is the cedron, a nut of a species of palm, which grows in different parts of New Granada, usually in secluded situations, and in small numbers. The nuts also are few, and grow near the upper extremity of the highest branches, so that it is necessary to cut down the tree to obtain them. This, of course, tends to increase the scarcity of the article. A little of the dry nut is scraped and swallowed, sometimes mixed with spirits. So high is the repute of this antidote, that the curates of the parishes generally keep a supply, and the people resort to them immediately when bitten by poisonous reptiles, and, it is said, always with the certainty of being cured, if in time.

PEACE.

Peace is better than joy. Joy is an uneasy guest, and always on the tip-toe to depart. It tires and wears us out, and yet keeps us ever fearing that the next moment it will be gone. Peace is not so—it comes more quietly, it stays more contentedly, and it never exhausts our strength, nor gives us one anxious, forecasting thought. Therefore let us pray for peace. It is the gift of God—promised to all his children; and if we have it in our hearts we shall not pine for joy, though its bright wings *never* touch us while we tarry in the world.

A VISIONARY'S FANCIES.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

They called him dead, they told me he was laid
In yon old forest—he had loved its shade—
And so I wandered there, and, 'neath the tree
Where he was wont to lisp sweet words to me,
I saw his name—Clair Vernon—graven deep
On the cold whiteness of a marble heap.

Oft in the soft light of the eve's first star,
A broken string from off his hushed guitar,
A snowy glove or faded flower, I see,
And turn forgetful, whispering—"Where is he?
And some mysterious voice from far replies:
"With God and all the angels in the skies."

There comes the moon—oh, he is coming too!
He wanders with her thro' the unbounded blue;
When from her couch of clouds ye see her rise,
His beauty flashes over half the skies,
And ye might deem it the returning light
Of the lost Pleiad burning thro' the night!

See yonder pearly cloud, divinely fair—
A pale, slight, youthful form 's reclining there
Like the unfathomed blue of midnight skies,
Soft with a tender starlight seem his eyes;
And how he smiles—the beautiful and true!
Alas! the moon goes—he is going too!

LORD WINCUP.

A DRAMA IN PROSE.

BY OLIVER SINCLAIR.

SCENE I.

THE YOUNG LORD AND THE FORESTER'S BRIDE.

Two young men were seated at a table, over their wine, in one of the old baronial halls of England.

One of them was the young lord of the manor, who had but a few days previously, by the death of his father, the earl of W——, come into the inheritance and into the possession of the proud titles of his ancestors.

He wore the uniform of the Guards, was handsome, but with a sensual eye; and flushed with wine and pride, as he now was, his looks were imperious and disagreeable. He talked in a loud tone, and boasted to his companion of his anticipated conquests in the field of beauty.

He had given a dinner that day, and these two alone remained sober, or rather not so inebriate as their fellows, who one after another had been led by mocking servants to their rooms.

"What! now you—you—are to be married in a month, my lord?" said his bottle companion, a poor, college toady, who worshiped wealth and rank, and was mean enough to be the shadow of his patron!"

"Bah! I marry for fashion's sake, and to unite the broad acres of Lady Emma to my own domains. She is a beauty, too, and I shall be proud of possessing her, and showing her about in London! Besides, you know I shall win a cool ten thousand on her!"

"Ah, indeed, my noble lord!" ejaculated the sycophant, sipping his wine, but not daring to drink deep, as his "noble master" had commanded him to keep sober, and look after *him*, if he should succumb!

"Lord Tom Berkley bet me a cool ten I could not win her!"

"Ha, ha, he, he! You've *won* the *cup* there, my lord! A good pun, eh?"

"A deuced *bad* one! But I have him for half his income! This will pay for Lady Emma's trousseau!"

"Wine and wassail, that is my motto," said Mr. Fispet, a little tipsily, swinging his glass quite irreverently, both as to the act and his quotation. "You don't drink, my lord! Let me fill your glass?"

"Aye, but let us drink to the three *w*'s!"

"What are they, Harry?"

"*Sir?*" thundered out the young noble, glaring upon his humbled companion.

"Beg ten million pardons, my noble lord! Didn't mean to call you so familiarly! When the wine 's in the wit 's out! I was a fool, you see!"

"Yes, a precious fool! The three *w*'s are—

"'Woman, wine and wassail!'"

"Good, excellent, bravo!"

In his excitement, and wishing to atone for his undue familiarity, Mr. Fispet actually rose and stood with one foot on his chair and the other upon the table, and drank the toast with a "Hip-pip-hurrah!" in response to which Lord Harry Wincup dashed his glass upon the board, saying that it was broad day, and time "for honest folk to be in bed."

The nobleman (not the noble man) then leaned on the shoulder of Fispet and reeled out of the banquet-hall. A few moments after their disappearance Mr. Fispet stole in again, and going to the wine poured out and drank several glasses rapidly and with a stealthy air, as if to make up for his forced bibous abstinence.

"Thinks I'm a f-f-ool! my lor' does! I'm wise e-e-nough to f-l-f-feather my own nest, I am! Fispet is not the f-first w-wise fellow that has p-p-played the fool for his own ends! Eh! This house is 'mazing unsteady on its foundations! How it moves up and down, and round and round! There go the table and decanters in a circle about me, faster and faster and f-f-fas——"

And down Mr. Fispet fell upon the floor, after in vain stretching out his hands to grasp some object to steady him.

Lord Harry Wincup prided himself on never getting so drunk that he could not walk! Great nerve and powers of endurance were his boast and pride.

After Fispet had left him at the door of his room, he entered it and was about to cast himself upon his bed when through the window he saw a beautiful young woman in the park below, talking and wringing her hands, and apparently in the deepest distress.

Her singular loveliness, enhanced by her tears and grief, alone impressed him. He went towards the casement and looked out. She was talking with the porter.

"What is it?" called the nobleman

"Her husband, one of the tenants, has been taken to jail, my lord, for debt, and——"

"Send her up here, George!" said the young lord. "I will hear her story and perhaps can relieve her."

With a hesitating step she followed the porter in, who conducted her to a room adjoining the apartment from the window of which Lord Wincup had seen her. He went in to speak to her, while the porter closing the door retired.

"Ah, a deuced beautiful creature!" soliloquized the half-inebriated nobleman, as he drew near her as she stood with her apron to her eyes, at a moderate distance from him. "What is the trouble, my love!"

"My husband was owing the shopkeeper, but being long ill was not able to pay, and this morning was carried off to prison, my lord. I did not know what to do; but as you are the landlord of my husband, my lord, I came to you!"

"You did perfectly right. I am charmed to see you! What is your husband's name?"

"William Eaton."

"Then you are the pretty Mary Eaton I've heard of! I am glad to see you, Mary! I'll do what I can! Don't spoil those beautiful eyes by weeping. Dry up your tears! I will have William out of jail before the sun now just rising sets!"

"Oh, my lord, you are too good! William told me *not* to come to you. But I would not heed him; for I knew you would help him! for has not God placed you in authority over us to do us good and be our best friend?"

"I am your best friend, my sweet Mary——"

As he spoke he laid his hand upon her fair shoulder, from which in her hurry to come to the castle she had lost the kerchief. She shrunk from beneath his touch, and the roue-ish glance of his eyes, and retreated a few steps.

"Pardon me, my lord," she said, blushing and humbly, yet firmly, "I am a married wife!"

"Not the less lovely, maid or wife! Nay, do not fly! Nor, mark me, do not trifle with me, or your husband may stay in jail longer than you think! I am not in the humor to be thwarted. Give me a kiss, and I will pay you the money in hand to release your husband, my under game-keeper. The fellow has no right to keep such a sweet doe in my preserves all to himself!"

"My lord, I can not consent to what would displease William! You do wrong to ask me what I have no power to bestow; for a wife's lips are sacred to her husband!"

"Do not preach to me with your pretty lips, child! I will kiss you, will you, nill you!"

As he spoke he advanced to clasp her in his arms, when she darted past him. In doing so he caught her by the arm. As she released her person, he, half tipsy, could not preserve his equilibrium, and reeling, pitched headlong to the floor!

The next moment the young wife fled the room, and in a few seconds might have been seen flying across the green, towards the forest, in the depths of which was her lonely and deserted home. Lord Wincup was hurt by the fall, and with a bleeding wound in his temples, caused by falling upon the corner of a chair, he staggered to his bed, and rung for his servant, with deep and bitter curses upon his tongue.

SCENE II.

THE YOUNG ARTIST AND THE WIDOW.

Ten years have elapsed and we present to our readers the second scene of our little drama.

In the door of the porch of a picturesque cottage, shaded by overhanging forest trees, and situated by a running brook that wound through a noble forest ere it gurgled past its door, clear and sparkling, sat a young widow; for such her attire showed her to be.

The paleness of a mourning heart for the loved husband of her youth, had not withered the exquisite tone of her beauty. There was about her an air of soft refinement and sweetness, which Sorrow's pencil can alone lend to female loveliness; yet the grace of her charms was rustic, not courtly. She was a modest daisy of the vale, not a flaunting dahlia of the green-house of fashion.

She was engaged in knitting a pair of boy's hose. Behind her, within the door, sat a boy of ten years upon a low cricket, with a pencil in his hand and a smooth piece of board before him. He was engaged in making a clever drawing of his mother as she sat, with a look of pleased consciousness at his occupation!

The boy is the mother's likeness fashioned by the Divine Hand, and to which the pencil of health has lent the roseate tints, which care and sorrow have driven from the maternal cheeks.

His fine attitude as he bends backward to catch the delicate lines of her features, the spirited head with its curling brown locks, his bright black eyes alight with the inspiration of true genius, the noble air of his countenance, all constitute in themselves such a picture as Raphael might have painted of himself in his boyhood, in his happiest moments.

"A little to the left, mother! Now bend your forehead—not too much!—very slightly! There—that is right! Oh, how beautiful you are, dear mother!"

The mother smiled, but sighed.

"Beauty, Charles," she said sadly, "is not to be coveted in one in my position of life! To the poor, beauty is often a source of misery! Had I been less lovely I might now have been a happy wife instead of a widow!"

"Ah, mother, beauty is a glorious and wonderful gift! Forms of beauty and color are my joy and delight! I could not love the ill-formed or the plain! I love to sit and imagine a world ten thousand times more beautiful than this! You don't know what lovely scenes, splendid cities, gorgeous birds, brilliant skies, lovely flowers, that do not exist, I create by thinking! When I am a man I will be a painter, and then you will see what beautiful pictures I will paint that I shall take out of my thoughts!"

"You have too much imagination, dear Charles! You must be a poor man! You are not born to be a great man!"

"I will *make* myself great then, mother," cried the lad, with the light of the star of fame kindling in his glance. "When Lord Wincup returns from India, I will ask him to send me to school where——"

"Do not talk of my lord!" said Mary Eaton. "I pray he may never return! You are old enough to hear what I wish to say! and discreet enough to keep it. It is my duty to undeceive you. Think not of my lord! He is my enemy as he was your father's!"

"Then he shall be mine, were he twenty lords! Why was he father's?"

"Because he is a wicked and powerful man. He took dislike to William and persecuted him, and finally, by artfully getting him entrapped into a position where he appeared to have been guilty of poaching, he had him imprisoned on false accusation. It broke poor William's heart; and your father died five years ago in prison."

"I will kill Lord Wincup!" cried the lad springing to his feet and clenching his pencil as if it were a dagger

"Nay; God is his Judge! Let us leave vengeance with him!"

"I wish I were a man! I will revenge myself on him! He shall be twice judged; here and before God!"

"Charles! This is wild talk and sinful!" The lad bowed his head in submission to her reproof; but his eyes were full of the hot tears of passion.

"Forgive me, mother!" he said, kissing her hand. "But why do we live here on his lands?"

"I have no other home!"

"When I get large you shall have one, dear mother!"

"I know it, my noble child! But this is the only shelter earth affords us; and by the kindness of your uncle Walter, William's brother, who is now the under-keeper in your father's place. But do not speak to him about this; for he does not understand or believe my lord's hatred of William! He believes his brother was really guilty!"

"But he was *not!*"

"No; and this Lord Wincup well knows; and Heaven may yet cause him to do your father's memory justice!"

"I will make him when I am a man! Who said this wicked lord was coming home?"

"The steward! You know my lord went to India with his regiment, and has been raised to some high post there, so he has been away for five years. But he has left the army and is to come home to reside. He may be here to-day. But be careful, Charles, and do not anger him!"

"Why not?"

"Because it will be dangerous to your safety."

"I don't care for my safety!"

"Then care for mine! It will injure me!"

"For your sake, then, I will forbear," he answered. "But I hope he won't come home."

"Finish my picture, Charles! It is pleasanter drawing than talking about such a disagreeable subject."

The lad resumed his pencil and had just completed an admirable likeness of his mother, when a gentleman with two out-riders dashed up along the forest road. Charles ran to the door to see who they were, as his mother, hatily rising to hasten in, exclaimed with terror—

"It is Lord Wincup!"

"Nay, but this is fair Mary Eaton," cried the sun-browned Indian soldier as he drew rein at the door before she could get in from the porch. "Do not fly me, Mary! By the rood! But time has only mellowed your beauty. Salute me; for I have been long away, and now you are a widow and your sweet lips are your own!"

"My lord, I hoped that time had changed you for the better! Excuse me—I must retire! Come in, Charles!"

"That lad is yours, I see by his brow and eye! a spirited boy! What hast thou in thy hand, my man? A drawing, eh?" he exclaimed, as bending from his saddle he took it from the young artist's hand. "Rough, but faithful! A good transcript of thy fair features, Mary! I shall prize it! Here, lad, take this gold and leave me the picture!"

As the nobleman spoke, he cast a doubloon to the ground, and pressing his lips to the picture's, said—

"I' faith, but if I may not have the substance, I'll e'en put up with the shadow, hoping better things in store for me by-and-by—eh, fair widow?"

The young woman's cheek burned with modest anger, and without a word she was retiring when she saw her son leap upon the stirrup of the rider, snatch the picture from his hand and spring back with it to the porch steps, where, stopping only to impress his own lips upon the spot where the noble's had been touched, he fled into the cottage, closing the door behind him.

"A mettled youth," said Lord Wincup, turning to Mr. Fispet, who accompanied him, now somewhat changed by years and climate outwardly, yet inwardly my lord's toady and tool.

"Shall I alight and chastise him with my whip, my lord?" he cried.

"No, not now. I have other revenge in mind. Come to my side, and let us talk while we ride on."

The two men then conversed together in a low tone, in which Mary Eaton's name was mentioned repeatedly, and after a mile had been traversed, they came in sight of the castle, to which, after an absence of five years, its lord was now first returning.

SCENE III.

THE TYRANNY OF POWER.

The earl had been two months back at his castle, the best part of which time he had spent in fruitless attempts to destroy the honor and peace of the lonely widow of his victim William. Descriptions of lustful violence are not to our taste, and we enter into no details. His arts, his force, his power were all foiled, and he vowed vengeance. It was necessary he should so obtain it as to conceal from the public eye the true motive. By his command, the brother George was sent to another estate as forester. The widow was permitted to remain until a quarter's rent had accumulated. On that day Lord Wincup, accompanied by his shadow, Fispet, and six men of his laborers, rode over to the cottage of Mary Eaton.

By his orders the furniture was taken out and carted off to be sold for the rent, and the house unroofed. The widow and her son, driven from the doors, took shelter from a storm that suddenly came up, under an oak. Lord Wincup sat by in his saddle, with a stern visage, and superintended the whole despoliation. Fispet, eager to go beyond his master, drove her from the tree-shelter.

"Now, woman, who might have shared a room in my halls, and been served on silver, and been gaily attired, let thy virtue supply these things, and find thee a roof! Off from my estate, you and your brat, and if I ever find either of you on a foot of my land again, I will put you both in the stocks!"

Thus speaking, in a menacing manner that was in keeping with his words, he spurred away from the scene of outrage to find covert from the storm, which now raged, accompanied by angry lightnings, and heavy, reverberating peals of thunder.

Heaven is not pitiless. There is One stronger than man. The widow and her son found shelter in a woodman's hut that night, and the next day the curate of the next parish received them into his hospitable home. Here the mother found constant employment, and the promising young artist was sent to school, where his talents and genius and noble nature won him many friends. But he never forgot the scene of his mother's and his own ejectment from their cottage. It seemed engraven on his mind and memory in every detail as with a pen of iron. At the age of twenty he was taken under the patronage of Sir Thomas Lawrence, and became his favorite pupil. In his twenty-sixth year he had won fame by a life-like portrait of the Duke of Sussex, and a landscape from his pencil (for he was as skillful as a landscape artist as in portraits) won the third prize at the Royal Academy. His name was now become known at court, and his fame as an artist of the first degree established.

Let us penetrate to his studio, or rather *atelier*. He has upon his easel a head of the Great Duke, for which the hero of Waterloo has given two sittings; yet already the resemblance is wonderful, and strikingly characteristic. Two or three friends, noblemen and artists are present, conversing with him as he paints. From the beauty of his person, the manly carriage of his head, his air of self-poise and independence, he looks the superior nobleman of them all. He feels the conscious power of genius, which, in itself, ennobles the whole man. He is the petted and lionized painter of the day. Prince Albert has not only sat to him, but dined with him at his own table. Of course all the nobility regard him as socially their equal. Yet he has the modest air of genius, as well as the spirit of its lofty pride.

One of the young lords jestingly says—

"Charles, do you know I am dying with woman's curiosity to know what picture engages your attention behind that brown curtain. Your friends say it is the portrait of your lady-love."

Over the face of the artist passed a slight cloud, but he banished it with a smile, and said—

"It is for the Prince Albert Exhibition!"

"A mystery?"

"Yes—till then!" was the answer, in a tone so peculiar that no further questions were ventured.

In the meanwhile Lord Wincup had risen to eminence as a politician, for a man's private crimes and personal corruption, if he be rich and great, do not intermingle with his public position in Europe; but these discrepancies will no doubt be all corrected in "the new heavens and new earth wherein shall dwell righteousness."

He had not only his hereditary seat in the House of Lords, but was the leader of a new party, and was spoken of for the new ministry. His name was prominent before all men, and when his "great speech" was reported in the "Times," and read by thousands, it did not reveal Mary Eaton and her wrongs. He had probably forgotten her and his revenges. But it has been said by a wise man, that all men will sooner or later again meet their misdeeds face to face, that either here or in eternity we shall all meet our earth-life again. Happy he who fears not to encounter it. Lord Wincup now sought everywhere popularity. His hat was lifted to men he despised, and to the poor and humble, to the base and groveling, that he might be all things to all men, and "so gain some."

Charles Eaton, the great artist, in the meantime went on painting in secret the mysterious picture which had so excited the curiosity of his friends. His mother was living with him in London in secure independence, and proud and happy in the fame of her son, who had in truth fulfilled his promise "to give her a home when he should be a man." Will his threat to be avenged on Lord Wincup be as literally accomplished?

We will wait and see.

SCENE IV.

THE REVENGE AND PUNISHMENT.

The reader is transported to the Prince Albert Gallery—an especial public exhibition for the purpose of giving an opportunity to all artists, foreign and native, to compete for prizes and honors.

The vast hall is crowded with the nobility and fashion.

What picture are so many assembled before, eager to gaze upon it? and what remarks of surprise, and recognition, and wonder, fly thus from lip to lip! Others press forward to see and hear, until the picture—a large landscape of a forest scene, and a cottage with figures—becomes the central object of attention.

A group of gentlemen are just entering. It is Prince Albert, accompanied by the Duke and members of the House of Lords. The Prince at the moment is talking with the bright, particular star of the day, Lord Wincup, who is in high spirits, and proud of the distinguished regard paid to him so publicly by his Royal Highness.

As they slowly advanced, the Prince said:

"There seems to be an unsually attractive painting, my Lord. Let us approach."

"With pleasure, your Royal Highness."

At their approach the crowd gave back, but with such peculiar and significant glances at Lord Wincup, that he would have believed that they were noticing him with more honor than the Queen Consort but for an expression in their eyes that he did not like. He heard his name in fifty voices, but took it for homage. He was so taken up with bowing to the crowd that he did not look at the picture. His attention was drawn to it by the Prince.

"Bless me, my Lord, who has painted this piece! What a likeness!"

"Perfect! It is he himself," uttered a score of voices. "What can it mean?"

Lord Wincup looked at the picture. It was a scene as large as the life. Before him, to his horror and amazement, he beheld the forest on his estate, the cottage of the widow, which some men were unroofing, while others were carrying out the furniture. He beheld *himself*, seated upon his horse, gazing as he actually gazed upon the scene of outrage. The form of the widow and of her son, portraits to the life, were seen as Fispet (a speaking likeness) was driving them from beneath the sheltering tree. The heavens in the picture were black with a tempest, and across the scene flashed lurid lightnings, which illuminated the ferocious face of the chief actor in the scene. The whole picture was eloquent, and told its own story.

The Earl of Wincup stood before it, pale, and trembling in every limb. It seemed to him as if a page from the Doom's-day book had been torn out, and presented to his appalled gaze beforehand. To steady himself he actually caught at the arm of the Prince Royal. It seemed no picture, but the reality itself.

"What means this, my Lord?" said the Prince.

"I know not! Some enemy hath done this!" he stammered; and so greatly was he overwhelmed with confusion and shame, that he lost his self-command and sunk insensible to the floor.

At this every one cried:

"There is *something* in it! Who can solve it?"

SCENE V.

THE DENOUEMENT.

The artist, Charles Eaton, sat at his easel, when a visitor was announced.

It was Lord Wincup!

He had guessed the unknown artist, for the catalogue had not revealed his name. He entered humbly and suppliantly, for the Prince had believed the tale the picture had told the world, and the Queen had demanded of the nobleman an explanation.

"I have come, Sir Charles," (we forgot to say that he had been knighted by the Queen for his genius,) he said, "to ask you what amount I shall pay you for your picture in the exhibition."

"It cannot be purchased, my Lord. Revenge is dear, dearer than gold!" And the artist went on with his work.

"I will give you ten thousand pounds to withdraw it from the exhibition!" said the Earl, pale as death.

"It is placed there by the committee, and must remain for the whole period of the season."

"Sir Charles Eaton, have pity upon me! You have had your revenge by brooding for years upon that accursed picture in your heart, till your hand had the skill to transfer it from your memory to the canvass. Remove it, sir, and I will give you double my offer!"

"No, my Lord! The picture was painted for this exhibition."

"Will nothing move you!" cried the Earl, in despair. "If it stands there I am infamous."

"No, sir. It is your judgment. It is but one scene of what will have to meet your eyes of your acts on earth! If you cannot endure to see this revived, how will you stand before the reproduction hereafter of every act of your wicked life!"

The Earl drew a pistol, and shot at the heart of the artist. The ball was flattened against a miniature of his mother, which hung above it. The next moment a second bullet went crashing through the nobleman's forehead by his own hand!

The soul of the intended murderer and suicide was now already on its way to its judgment from that "Book of Remembrance," *one* leaf of which, presented to his gaze on earth, had driven him to despair.

It was said in the papers that the Earl had died of apoplexy. The Prince alone knew the whole secret. The public gossiped, and once truly, that the ambitious Earl's true character having been exposed by the painting, he had committed suicide to escape the scorn of the world's eye.

The next day thousands flocked to the exhibition to see the picture; but it had been removed privately in the night! The son had justly avenged the mother and father, and the picture disappeared forever!

GRANDMOTHERS.

BY GEORGIANNA HERBERT.

Even in a city "Grandmother's House" is a beloved and serene old place, but when it is in the country words fail to describe its deep, deep peace and delightful content. It must be experienced to be understood. To come, after years of struggle, noise, and confusion, after a long and wearing strain upon every bodily and spiritual power, and sit down and uncover your head, and throw off restraint and care, under the roof where you (and your mother before you) danced and played through many an hour of happy childhood, is, indeed, like entering "into rest." It is enough to make one, weary with the contest of life, wish to remain hid forever from the world, abiding for a few serene, unclouded years beside the comforter of one's infancy, comforting *her* until her journey ends, and then lie contentedly down beside her and share her sleep. You look upon her, the dear old saint, standing so near the land of glory that its beauty shines about her, and its gentleness and love are in all she does and says, and you wish, oh! so sincerely, that *your* work were as nearly over and as *well done* as hers.

The aged are a marvel to the young. How far backward they can look; and how strange it is to be able to look back so far.

"Tell me a story, Grandmother. Make believe that I am a child again—that I never left your side. Make believe that this dear old house, and the scenes about it, that your form and face, and the faces and forms that here were wont to assemble, are *all* that my heart and memory hold; that no cares haunt me, that no thoughts fly out and go seeking otherwhere for their objects; that no wishes and yearnings reach beyond this blue horizon, and that the heart which beats once more beside dear grandma, the heart that a few years ago was that of a simple-minded and unworldly child, is *not* bound by any bonds to distant and far different places and people. Tell me a story, Grandmother." And your Grandmother pushes up her "specs" and takes her knitting, and says, looking at you with a pleased and happy smile—

"Well, child, I will"—and then follows relations of wars with the red-coats and the Indians, of old forts in the fields about, of old-fashioned ways of living; of what a fine, gentlemanly man your grandfather was—of how his ships went down at sea, and his houses went *up* in the war, and of the many ways by which you, the descendant of wealthy ancestors, came to be a poor, portionless, and houseless child.

Oh! Grandmother! to some thou art the *last* tie that binds the heart to all the sacred influences of childhood, and when thy life is over and thy home desolate, *such* will be cut loose forever from their early life, and left floating up and down, up and down, in restless and unsatisfied endeavor, until *they* too are overtaken and quieted by That which giveth final rest. Oh! Grandmother, waiting a moment in the border land, joyful to thee will be the hour of thy departure, but to us it will be most grievous.

ANTI-CHRISTIAN.

The more you educate and polish man's intellect, unless his moral nature be kept equally under improving influences, the more like Satan you make him; for Lucifer is intellectual and well educated; without doubt, too, he has a superior refinement of his own; he is aristocratic and proud; and the spirit of exclusiveness and stand-aside-for-I-am-better-than-thouism, comes altogether from him.

Christianity builds no walls; it is no aristocrat, but a leveler, (not by *casting down*, buy by *lifting up*,) in its very essence. It knows no distinction except between right and wrong, and acknowledges but two classes—the righteous and the wicked. The spirit which regards as best and most worthy of notice that which is peculiar to the few, and which looks with *less* interest and regard on that which affects the many, is anti-Christian. The spirit that would elevate the few at the expense of the many; that is more respectful to Classes than it is to Humanity, is from *beneath*. So are all men, all books, all papers, let their pretensions be what they may, whose influence is for Classes rather than for Humanity. How many could be called by name—men refined out of all naturalness, polished out of all steadfastness, educated out of all humanity, who call themselves Christians, yet make it manifest in all that they utter or perform that they are profoundly ignorant of the first principles of the Gospel of Christ.

It is a fact that the works of bold and open Infidelity are not so much to be dreaded as are the insidious influences of polite and exclusive Anti-Christ which goes regularly to worship in the holy temple; but is not to be caught, even there, near to a sinner of "the lower classes."

By so much as deeply rooted pride is worse than transient passion, by so much as settled scorn and contempt are worse than momentary anger, and by so much as heartlessness is worse than a heart untrained, is the spirit of refined selfishness worse and more hopeless than the roughness and vulgarity of the unrefined masses.

THE SENSATIONS OF YOUTH.

The sensations peculiar to youth, being the result of impulse rather than reflection, have the advantage over those of manhood, however the pride of reason may give the latter the superiority. In manhood there is always a burden of thought bearing on the wheels of enjoyment. In manhood, too, we have the misfortune of seeing the wrecks of early associations scattered every where around us. Youth can see nothing of this. It can take no review of antecedent pleasures or pains that become such a source of melancholy emotion in maturer years. It has never sauntered through the rooms of a building, and recalled early days spent under its roof. Our early recollections are pleasing to us because they look not on the morrow. Alas! what did that morrow leave when it became merged in the past!

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AN ARTICLE FOR PARENTS.

The education of the mind has come to be regarded, in our country, as a universal necessity. We believe that all men—and each individual man—ought to be educated; that our liberties depend on the proper education of the people, and the sound and enlightened public opinion thus formed; that every human mind ought to be educated as much as possible; that the immortal powers bestowed by our Creator cannot be developed too much, or range too widely the limitless realm of knowledge; and that it is the bounden duty of those who possess these blessings, to aid others in their attainment. Such principles as these, of whose truth we are well persuaded, and which we are in the constant habit of asserting, with reference to the education of the mind, apply in a far higher sense to the education of the heart, and enforce with tenfold power the duty of religious instruction. The former is not complete without the latter; for a system which educates a human soul for time, and ignores all preparation for eternity, is without doubt, at once imperfect and unnatural. But, in a truer view of the matter, mental training without moral culture is positively dangerous, and possibly destructive. Some men glorify Mind and Reason, as if they were almost gods to be worshiped; and talk of Education, as if it were the only and adequate regenerating power of the world and the human race. The truth is, education alone is an insufficient moral basis; it must be sanctified by divine truth, or it will become a curse instead of a blessing. To store the memory with knowledge—to train the understanding, to discipline the reason, to draw forth all the wondrous energies of the human soul—and then have all this perverted to the ruin of the man himself, the injury of his fellow-men, and the hindrance of the cause of Truth in the world—it would have been far better to leave those powers dormant and unseen forever; far better let the ore rust in the mine, than forge a weapon from it for the hand of the evil one.

In the rude block of marble, just brought from the quarry, and ready to be fashioned by the sculptor's chisel, there lie hidden a thousand possible conceptions of beauty or deformity. If the right artist and the right instrument are brought to bear upon it, there may stand forth a face hideous with depravity, malice, and every evil passion, or a countenance glowing with the light of a morning star, and clothed in the loveliness of an inhabitant of heaven. The photographer takes the burnished metallic plate, and prepares it for the impress of the sunlight. But it still remains perfectly optional with him, whether upon that sensitive and receptive surface shall be stamped features so radiant with beauty that the beholder shall gaze upon it with pleasure, and remember it with delight, or lineaments so distorted with passion, and marred with vice and evil, that we shall turn away disgusted from the sight. Just so, in the mind unsubjected as yet to the processes of education, there lie concealed the possibilities of unlimited good and unlimited evil; and just according as holy or unholy instruments do the work, may that soul become an angel or a fiend. So plain is it that, superadded to intellectual culture, we must have moral and religious training.

CROAKERS.

The prognostication of evil and universal destruction seems to be a pleasant business for some people. At any rate, they never do anything else. They are always shaking their heads and sniveling over the "evil tendencies of the age." A murder or a defalcation is to them a positive sign that creation is on the eve of "bursting up," or "caving in," or both. They can see no signs of promise in the innumerable activities and developments of the age. All is blear, and blank, and cheerless to them. They are simply perambulating masses of misty lugubriosity. They are the most pestilent of social pests, and should be exterminated. This is no retrogressive age. It is full of life, progress, and goodness. It is rich in present fruitage and glorious with future promise.

THE BENCH AND THE PRESS.

It is impossible to consider some of our law proceedings, and to escape being struck with the soreness of feeling which is displayed in them, by the dispensers of the justice of the country, towards whatever concerns the press. Its excesses, instead of being regarded as the overflowings of a pure and vivifying stream, bearing health and refreshment through the land—here and there perhaps causing a trifling mischief, but fertilizing and rendering productive the whole surface of the country—are used as arguments against the thing itself. There is a uniform tendency to say something injurious respecting it on the most trivial opportunity available for the purpose—and that something generally grounded on the most untenable reasoning—as if the press were the declared enemy of the profession and practice of Law. There seems a constant wish to master its free spirit, and to confine it to the most narrow and petty regulations. Could those who indulge in their vituperations against the press carry the matter in their own way, nothing would ever be allowed to appear in print but what was literally provable on oath.

The examination of public men and their measures, the pursuit of truth, the arraignment of evils too subtle for the coarser bonds of an act of the legislature to restrain, must cease at the dictum of lawyers, and free discussion be chained to the formalities of the most narrowing and self-consequential of human pursuits. This disposition is partly generated by the opposite characters of the press and of the law. Law belongs more immediately to human action—to deed, and not to thought. The press belongs to mind and to imagination, and is not to be judged of as we judge of fact. It is within the empire of intellect, and its range cannot be defined by statute, nor its errors and mistakes rectified by human jurisprudence, though an excess of one particular character may. The errors of the press can only be subdued by the operation of reason and moral feeling. Law is a very limited empire as respects mind: that of the press is boundless. The lawyer is a mere expounder of the institutions of the legislator: he is his agent to effect certain limited objects. It is not his business to listen to nor act upon the suggestions of genius, nor always even of sound reason. Written laws confine him to the very letter of his duty. How can it be expected he should be otherwise than he is, when life is too short for him to penetrate through the cloud of involution and perplexity in which the study of his own profession has been laboriously enveloped?

The power of the press is also an object of his envy. Its property of influencing large bodies of men, of moving mankind *en masse*, is viewed with jealousy; and as it is one of the safeguards of liberty, it has a tendency to enlarge instead of restrain; a quality the very reverse of law. It can, therefore, hardly be wondered at, that some feeling of antipathy should be shown towards it, arising from the habits as well as ambition of lawyers. But it by no means follows that it is prudent to exhibit it on every occasion.

THE BEST DINNER SAUCE.

"At dinner," says Pliny in one of his letters, "if I have only my wife or a few friends with me, *some author is read to us*; and after dinner we have music."

Reading at table would perhaps hardly suit us moderns. We are so shy of pedantry that we sometimes prefer stupid and wearisome frivolity to the least appearance of it. But something might be done to redeem from utter inanity and waste the not inconsiderable time we pass at table. Let us see. One hour at dinner, and a half hour each at breakfast and tea, is not much if any above the average, even with us Americans, notorious as we are, with the rest of the world, for *bolting* our half-masticated food, and hurrying off to work again. That is two hours a day, two days and a half in the month, and *a whole month in the year!* In other words, one-twelfth of our time is spent at the table, and that, too, taken from the very best of our time. This time is by no means to be looked upon as thrown away. Repose, cheerful talk, the mutual interchange of minute good offices, all are good, good for the mind and heart, while they help the digestion, and so benefit the physical man. They polish the manners, improve the utterance, awaken thought, and actualize, on a small scale, M. Vattemaire's scheme, effecting a sort of *inter-individual exchanges*.

All this intercourse at table brings about unconsciously, and, to some extent, inevitably. But it might do so in a much higher degree, by a tone of conversation at once elevated, various and cheerful, and the more elevated, of course the more various and cheerful. Everybody remembers the remark of a foreigner who dined one day with Plato. "Plato's dinners are very pleasant at the time, and they *taste well the day after*."

Much depends on the starting of good topics. By no means after the fashion of Dr. Blimber, who used to *choke* his boys at dinner with a thesis on Roman antiquities. The thing must be done in a free and easy way Mr. Wilberforce used to pass for one of the most graceful and delightful talkers in England Madame de Stael said he was absolutely the most fascinating Englishman she had ever met with. He has let us into the secret of the matter in his diary. To occupy his position in society as a frequent entertainer and guest, and yet to "redeem the time," was with him a matter of considerable reflection. He used to prepare *launchers*, as he called them—subjects of fresh and stirring interest, to be projected on the company at table, and lift up the conversation out of that wretched *niaiserie* into which it is apt to fall, even among cultivated people. So that the brilliant and animated talk which charmed the gay but highly gifted Frenchwoman, was, like Sheridan's wit, and other admirable "dinner-sauce," as Hood calls it, more the result of premeditation than it seemed.

AIM HIGH.

It is the aim that makes the man. Without an aim a man is nothing, as far as the utter destitution of force, weight, and even individuality among men can reduce him to nonentity The strong gusts and currents of the world sweep him this way and that, without steam or sails to impel, or helm to guide him. If he is not speedily wrecked or run aground, it is "more by good luck than good management." We have never heard a more touching confession of utter weakness and misery than these words from one singularly blest with the endowments of nature and of providence—"My life is aimless!" Take heed, young man, of an *aimless* life. Take heed, too, of a low and sordid aim. A well ascertained and generous *purpose* gives vigor, directness, and perseverance to all man's efforts. A well-disciplined intellect, character, influence, tranquility, and cheerfulness within, success and honor without, are its sure concomitants. Whatever a man's talents and advantages may be, with no aim, or a low one, he is weak and despicable; and he cannot be otherwise than respectable and influential with a high one.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

A LEAF NOT FROM THE "BOOKS OF THE OPERA"

You might as well set me down for a heathen, for I don't like the opera, and what is more, I don't believe half the people who say that they do, else why do they laugh and whisper through the performance, and twist their moustaches into horny shapes, and settle their bracelets, and arrange their shawls and make eyes, and do anything but what they profess to come there for—viz., to listen to the music. It is all a sham; they go there because it is a good place to show off—because there are handsome men and pretty women there—because it is the fashion. Shall I like a thing merely because 'tis the fashion? Shall I sit in a vapor bath in one torturing posture from seven o'clock till twelve, at the mercy of the cramp, for fashion? It is all very well for gentlemen who run out between the acts, and come in wiping their satisfied lips so provokingly, to ask, "Why not stand up in these intervals?" It is not so agreeable to have a dozen impertinent lorgnettes leveled at you, to hear your name handed from mouth to mouth, and your genealogy, from Adam down, discussed in your hearing by your well-bred neighbors. Some people diligently study the "books of the opera" to find out what all the deafening racket is about. I never touch one. If the music is good for anything, I take it, it will tell its own story, and if it is not, it is bad enough to be forced to listen to it, without boring yourself to read what it is *intended* to do. I have been to the opera when the music appealed to me; when my heart stood still, lest I should lose a note; when I was dying to throw my arms round somebody's neck—(not *anybody's*)—and cry for sheer ecstacy. That's what I call music; but that's only a delicious parenthesis I occasionally get there at the cost of a seven hours' sit. But a slam-bang crash, an ear-splitting squeal; eyes turned inside out; mouth twisted under the ears; fat, red-faced prima-donnas *trying to get out of their gowns at the top*—I will none of it, especially when it takes till day-light to get from Fourteenth street back to my pillow in Brooklyn.

Spite of that, I maintain that I love music. I can't sing a note—more's the pity I can't prate about "Verdi," and "Rossini," and "Bellini," and all the other *ninnys*, but I like a baby's laugh; I like a brook's ripple; I like the shivering leaf-music in the tall tree-tops in the woods; I like the spirit-voices in the starry midnight; but I *don't* want my ears deafened, and my eyes put out, and my enthusiasm bottled up to be uncorked to the order of the Academy of Music in Fourteenth street, *whether or no*. In short, I don't like the opera one time in ten. There—now you have it.

FANNY FERN.

DID YOU EVER SEE THEM?

There are people who get up in the morning for the express purpose of making somebody uncomfortable before the day is out. They generally pitch upon some sunny-faced, happy, singing human lark, caroling high above the ditches and marshes of life, soaring in the blue ether of his happiness nearer God and the angels than he himself knows anything about, and taking practiced aim at some vulnerable point, bring him plump down, with maimed wing, to flutter in the dust. Now what is good enough for such a miscreant? The more you flutter the better he likes it; every writhe of your agonized spirit is delicious music to this vulture; there is one other person in the world as uncomfortable as himself. What right had *you* to be happy when *his* liver was out of order? It was clearly a piece of impertinent presumption, and so there you lie moaning and turning, the sunshine all gone, the chill mist of despondence gathering thick about you, and your persecutor standing by, turning you over now and then with his foot, to see if there is life enough left for a fresh attack.

You have seen just such, I dare say; smooth-faced, plausible wretches, bowing and smirking you into the hottest purgatory. Now an honest enemy I know how to meet; but your malicious, mealy-mouthed, Watts'-Psalms-and-Hymns wretch, who takes your hand with his velvety palm, only to tell you that your pulse is wrong, and that your father died at your age—I wonder if there *is* salvation for such?

FANNY FERN.

TOO MUCH LATIN

Not in its place, for the Latin is a noble language. It is "out of place," that we have too much Latin—particularly in the forms and pleadings of law, and in the nomenclature and practice of medicine. Indeed, there is no more pedantic and hurtful use of learning, than that which mars universal literature by interspersing it with "foreign phrases," unintelligible and provoking to the ordinary reader, and generally unexplained by note or comment. And Latin is the language in which this offense is chiefly committed. Scarcely an orator or an author, on any occasion omits this obnoxious interlarding, and the "learned professions," so called, practice it still more abundantly, evidently to keep up the pretentious dignity and mystery of their vocations. It is not only a method for confusing, but also for defrauding the mass of mankind. We are willing to stand a *modicum* of Latin, but we object to being uselessly bored with it in every "learned book," and taxed on account of it by every learned practitioner

PRIZE FIGHTS.

A prize fight is not the worst thing in the world—more's the pity It even has its advantages and blessings for decent people hereabouts. It for a time relieves the city of much of its ruffianism. Concealed deadly weapons are removed to a distance pleasant to contemplate It gives our country friends a chance to see our vice-reeking rowdies, and to note their horrid obscenity and blasphemousness, and thereby prepares the country members of the Legislature for the enactment of stringent laws. As for the pommeling received by the combatants, every decent man should rejoice thereat; and the "brutal scene," about which we hear so much, never hurts anybody's morals or deadens anybody's sensibilities, simply because nobody who has any morals or sensibility ever goes near said "brutal scene."

DRESS YOUR CHILDREN WARM.

This is one of the most dangerous seasons for children. Colds and coughs are now easily fastened upon them, often resulting in consumption and premature death. Therefore, dress them warm. Let their necks and throats be well protected. Let your boys' pantaloons reach to the instep. Don't dress them in monkey trowsers reaching only to the knee or middle of the leg, and leaving their limbs exposed to the chilling air. Do not sacrifice your children's health to the gratification of a circus rider's taste; but dress them with the paramount view of comfort and safety.

WINTER AND ITS WANTS.

Goldenly as the Autumn may ride out its career, the cold, biting Winter will as surely come as ever, and is even now close at hand. Winter, shutting out the fair scene of green fields and mottled woods, the brooklet and the bird-song, and all the gay belongings of the seed-time and harvest seasons. And with its vailing of the earth's "milder loveliness," Winter will bring new wants to all, and a time of sore suffering to the poor. Many who are now comfortable in the sunshine, subsisting on chances and charities, careless of the morrow, will soon find a subtle and bitter foe in the "nipping frost," and sleet and snow—and will have to creep shivering to whatever shelter may offer.

Multitudes, the world over, can by no foresight escape the severer burthens of Winter; but there are other mulitudes, whose improvidence during the kindlier seasons makes the Winter doubly severe. All such, if they were wise, would imitate the "busy bee" and the provident squirrel, which improve the days of sunshine and fruitage, and comfortable toil, to hedge themselves against the waste and barrenness of Winter. But the improvident are not given to wisdom; their common proverb is, "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." Their knowledge of what must come, is no warning, so long as they are not absolutely driven to the wall; then all their repentance and regrets are unavailing. It is a strange fact, that the poorer classes, everywhere, are the least forethoughtful and provident. It would seem often as though a blind, passive fatalism was the inspiration of their lives.

But such being the inevitable case, it the more behoves all those who are habitually taxed, or called by sympathy to aid the poor and suffering, to so arrange and distribute their aid that it may most ease the pinch of want and do the greatest good. In our city there is an endless call upon benevolence, as well as an onerous tax upon property, in behalf of poverty and mendicity, and it is to the honor of humanity that the call is most bountifully answered. No community supports public, or practices private charity, more generously than ours—not only to soften the rigors of Winter, but through all seasons of the year. But there is much of our benevolent aid that might be more effectively rendered, with no more cost and but little more trouble to the givers. Let each who aids help the needy within his or her immediate vicinity, of whose real circumstances he or she can be assured. By this course thousands of "professional" and not needy beggars will be foiled. In giving, give money only when food, raiment or fuel will not meet the want. There are too many temptations to misspend the money given in charity. By practising these two rules, or cautions, one-third more real aid may be extended with the same means. Winter is so near, that the consideration of both its wants in reference to the poor is a matter of Christian and human duty.

HEROISM IN LITERATURE.

"Peace hath her victories no less than war," is the far-famed expression of a philanthropic heart and profound mind. The honesty, energy and self-denying course of Sir Walter Scott on the loss of his fortune—a fortune reaped by his incomparable pen—is one of those victories. War does not afford a spectacle of more majesty. After long years of noble toil which had enriched the great author, while it delighted a whole world, he, without a moment's warning, found himself moneyless and landless. A publishing firm, into which he first ventured through motives of benevolence, failed, and Scott was bankrupted. Approaching old age, he had thrown on his shoulders an appaling load of debt, to the amount of six hundred thousand dollars!—not one cent of which had been incurred by any transaction of his own. He declined making any composition with his creditors; he refused any aid from his friends; he would not listen to any donations from the public—that public which he had so long amused, instructed and elevated in mind and morals; but at once gave up his magnificent possessions, and began a new literary career, for the purpose of paying over half-a-million of dollars. He allowed himself not a single hour for recreation, but morning, noon and midnight worked, worked, worked. In a few weeks appeared "Woodstock;" then followed in rapid, almost miraculous, succession, several of his well-known works. Already more than two hundred and fifty thousand dollars were paid. At this rate of working, says one of Scott's most elegant and judicious eulogists, it was evident that the great debt would soon be canceled. But, alas! his frame, sturdy as it was, could not endure the unrelaxing labor. He had a stroke of paralysis. He *must* stop his exertions. The government placed a frigate at his disposal (noble deed) and he went to Italy. But the "golden bowl" was broken, and in less than a year the hero returned to Scotland to die. His last words were:

"Lockhart, I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man,—be virtuous,—be religious,—be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here."

Brave, glorious, great Walter Scott! how thy grand, true soul passed away like the song of a trumpet, subdued but sublimed by the sweet, sacred and heavenly teachings of thy Divine master

LABOR.

In that simple word lies the true secret of human success. This is the talisman which solves the mysterious difference between one man's history and another's. The *open sesame* of life is *labor*. Carlyle was not far wrong when he pronounced labor to be the very essence of heroism. One of the ancients went further, and called it the universal conqueror (labor vinat omnia). In the little ant, the slow snail, and the "feeble folk" of the "conies," it supplies the lack of size, speed and strength; and in man, where its operations are directed by light from within and from on high, scarce anything seems impossible to it. Who of us has not seen it begin its undertakings in conflict with every kind of difficulty, gradually but surely master them all, and, though often baffled and defeated, gain at last complete and brilliant success? "The only way," said Doctor Johnson, "to bring anything to pass is *to go doggedly about it*." Mr. Wilberforce amended the maxim as follows—*to go about it cheerfully, thankfully, with unshaken faith in God, and unflinching perseverance.*

THE ELECTIONS.

The country has recently passed through one of its periodical political excitements, and has come out of the strife just as good as new. We are no politician, and don't care who is President so long as he pays his subscription to the LEDGER promptly in advance; and therefore there can be no harm in our congratulating all successful candidates and sympathizing with all the defeated ones, which we hereby do. To the triumphant we would say, wear your triumphs meekly; to the disappointed, bear your defeats philosophically. Our country has room, if not offices, enough for us all, and no honest, industrious man, who keeps out of politics, can very well fail to make a decent living in the land over which the American Eagle screams and flaps his wings.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

THE poring pedant, who will slake his thirst *only* from antiquity, will find that it abounds with wells so deep that some of them were not worth the digging, and now so dark that they are not worth the descending, yet so dry withal that he will come up more thirsty than he went down, with eyes blinded by the dust of time, and with lips unquenched by the living waters of truth.

HE who pleases himself without injuring his neighbor, is quite as likely to please half the world as he who vainly strives to please the whole of it; he also stands a far better chance of a majority in his favor, since, upon all equal divisions, he will be fairly entitled to his own casting vote.

THE Southern Messenger has an article denouncing *Time*, the fierce old spirit of the glass and scythe. A great many rapid writers have *written against time*, and fast men and horses have *run against it*, and almost everybody, we fear, *abuses* it.

THE dispensation of justice may spring from the thirst of domination over our fellow creatures, and religion itself, even when sincere, may be instigated by that selfish regard to future reward, which has been termed other-worldliness.

A COUPLE of gentlemen, both of whom were recently turned out of office, are running against each other in Alabama for another office. Inasmuch as they have, in political phrase, lost their heads, probably they will run *neck and neck*.

A LETTER from China says that the Chinese have succeeded, by the skill of their cultivators, in producing a new and delicious variety of tea. We suppose they have accomplished this by *crossing their teas*.

"I HAVEN'T taken a drop of liquor for a year," said an individual of questionable morals. "Indeed! but which of your features are we to believe—your lips or your nose?"

THE American Agriculturist speaks of a species of pigs with square snouts. A learned goat can add, subtract and multiply, but these pigs can give an illustration of the *square root*.

THERE is more meaning and philosophy than at first sight appears in Coleridge's answer to a lady when she asked him whether he believed in ghosts. "Oh no, madam, I have seen too many to believe in them."

THE web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together; our virtues would be proud if our faults shamed them not, and our crimes would despair if they were not comforted by our virtues.

CHARITY not seldom proceeds from pride, from our desire to get rid of an uneasy sensation or from the hope of being repaid with usurious interest what we lend to the Lord.

"I WILL lay you a wager," said one sportsman to another, "that I will shoot more crows to day than you!" "Oh, yes, you could always beat me *crowing*."

A WRITER in the Literary Messenger asks "if there is no way for a lady always to remain *young*." Certainly there is—she can go to Utah and marry Brigham.

THERE is no castle upon the earth so strong that it may not be taken; but our castles in the air may bid defiance to our enemies.

THE New York papers make mention of a policeman who knocked down six persons in the late Staten Island riot. He was the right sort of a six-pounder.

A MAN'S happiness is said to hang upon a thread, and it may be added that the man himself sometimes deserves to hang upon a rope.

JOHN NEAL says that the eagle "has a contempt for all other birds." The owl, however, is more contemptuous still · he hoots at everything.

IT is said that the hunger for gold generally increases with age. Accordingly we see that most of our old people always *have it in their mouths*.

"SHE isn't all that my fancy painted her," bitterly exclaimed a rejected lover, "and, worse than that, she isn't all that she paints herself."

IT is far less important that a tradesman or anybody else should keep his carriage than that he should be able to keep his feet

ISN'T the wind getting round? said a traveler to his companion. I hope so; it has been sharp long enough.

THERE'S no fun in going a-fishing when the fish won't bite, and the gnats and musquitoes will.

THE fact that a man's word is at a discount is no indication that his note will be discounted in bank.

THE next best thing to force in speaking is comely grace in keeping silence.

MANY writers lay claim to correctness, who are better entitled to correction.

IF you wish for *heart-ease*, never look to *marry gold*.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A MRS. HUGINSOHN, living in Broome street, in this city, left her babe, five months of age, sleeping on the bed, while she was busy working in the kitchen, and a couple of hours after, on going to see how the little sleeper was, she found it dead, with a large cat (belonging to the family) crouched by the side of its head. There was no mark of violence on the infant, and it is supposed by the mother, and those who believe in such things, that the cat had killed it by "sucking its breath."

THE late excitement about the prize fight between Morrissey and the "Benicia Boy" seems to have brought out the cat-and-dog propensity of human nature to an alarming degree. Brutal fights are occurring in all sections of the country; and at one of unusual ferocity, which came off in South Brooklyn a few nights since, one man had his left eye gouged out, and another's nose was bitten off.

A LADY, writing from New Orleans, says that she was recently introduced to a married couple near that city, whose combined ages amounted to only twenty-nine years, the husband being fifteen and the wife fourteen years old, and yet the baby, which was cutting its first tooth, was as sprightly and promising as any baby need be.

SOME of the shrewd old brokers and "operators" in Wall street say that we shall soon be in the midst of one of the wildest bursts of speculation the country has ever seen. Millions of dollars have been lying idle for months, and the holders of the cash are becoming rabid for a rush at something—no matter what.

IT is stated in a statistical report recently issued in London, that during the year 1856, over eleven thousand men and six hundred women were imprisoned for debt, in England. Among the former was one white-headed old man, eighty-four years of age, who had been in jail over sixteen years.

THE London Times says that the amount of money already expended on the Atlantic cable, including the expenses of the Agamemnon, Niagara, Gorgon, and other ships of the British and American navies, amounts to over six millions of dollars.

A NEW YORKER, writing from the interior of Texas, says that sweet potatoes there are commonly from three to five inches in diameter, and from eight to twenty inches in length, and as good as they are big.

IT is stated by a person of great experience in such matters, that lock-jaw in horses can be cured by wrapping them in blankets wrung out of water of two hundred degrees temperature

IT is said that the Baptist churches of this city have offered Spurgeon, the celebrated London preacher, ten thousand dollars and his expenses, if he will come to New York and preach three times a week for six months.

A GIRL weighing six hundred and forty pounds was recently on exhibition in this city, who amused herself by playing with and handling a young boa constrictor, seventeen feet in length

A GIRL named Jane Wade broke into the Connecticut State Prison a short time since, and stole from the kitchen thereof six pans of mush that had been prepared for prisoners' breakfasts.

A FULL-GROWN black bear was recently killed in Sullivan county in this State If there are any more bears of the same sort left in that county, the children should be kept out of the woods.

A COUPLE were recently married in Hamburg, S. C., whose courtship commenced in jail, where the man was confined for drunkenness and the woman for stealing pork.

A HAVANA (Cuba) paper says that a lady who had long been bereft of reason, was restored to sanity by the shock of the terrible explosion which recently occurred in that city.

THERE are at present rumors of "gold regions" having been found in Iowa, Kansas, Arkansas, North Carolina and Vermont, to say nothing of the Pacific countries.

INGRATITUDE.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

"There came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand."

The simple islanders who built
'Mid driving rain and blast,
A fire to cheer the shipwreck'd train
That on their shores were cast,

Astonished, from the genial flame
Beheld a reptile start,
And fiercely on a stranger's hand
Tlie fatal venom dart.

But more astonish'd still, beheld
The man who felt the fang
Shake lightly off the "evil beast,"
Without a mortal pang.

And there they knelt, an awe-struck band,
Upon that rocky sod,
And old Melita heard them laud
The stranger as a god.

Oh friends, who ever in your hearts
Maintain the warmth of love,
Dispensing benefits on all
Who in your orbit move,

When round your sacred household hearth
Ye draw the inmates fair,
Take heed, amid that cherish'd group
Who sit, to warm them there,

Lest, quicken'd by the inspiring flame,
Even 'mid that hallow'd band,
The viper of ingratitude
Might fasten on your hand.

For ye, alas! might fail to wield
The Great Apostle's charm,
To turn the poisonous fang aside
And feel no lasting harm.

RICHARD HOFFMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

PETER MANGLES PUZZLED.

It is no part of our creed that sorrow destroys either the physical or intellectual existence of its victims. Like the mildew on the flower, it may rob life of its freshness—palsy the energies of both heart and brain, changing the former into a living sepulchre, whose tenants are useless regrets for the past, or self-reproaches as bitter as they are vain.

Under any circumstances, the loss of his grandson would have been a terrible blow to the feelings of Mr. Bently; but, coming as it did, at the moment of success, when Richard had succeeded in unmasking the real character of Carus Kearn and proving the integrity of his father, it fell with double violence.

Still it did not kill. Death perhaps would have been mercy; it rendered the future a blank, cheerless as that sea

Whose waters bear no living thing,
Shunned even by the sea-bird's wing,
A lonely scene, a desert rude,
A barren waste, a solitude.

The letter, written by his wife, added to the bitterness of the old merchant's self-reproaches; for, whilst appealing to his affection in behalf of their only child, it amply justified the extraordinary step she had taken in giving her consent to his daughter's marriage with the father of our hero. In the solitude of his chamber he perused and re-perused it till every word became engraved with terrible distinctness upon his memory.

As it unveils much that has hitherto been doubtful to our readers, we consider the time has arrived for imparting its contents.

It ran thus:

"I am dying of a strange malady, which has baffled the skill of my physician, and in this world we shall never meet again. Rachel will have no mother near you to plead in her behalf, and even my memory may be a reproach, for having consented to what the world may consider an ill-assorted marriage. Richard, I did more than consented, *I advised it*.

"You have frequently accused me of a prejudice against your nephew Carus. Shortly after your departure for India, I obtained *proof*—I repeat the word *proof*—that he was not only ungrateful to you, his benefactor, but a bad, dishonest man. Unhappily, I dare not lay that proof before you; he bound me by an oath at the moment I detected—— oh! that I could tell you all! but my lips are sealed. On the word of the wife who loved you, who never yet deceived you, who must soon answer to that tribunal where every thought is judged, I have spoken truthfully.

"I know the pertinacity with which you adhere to a plan once formed. I know, also, of your design of uniting Rachel with her cousin Carus, and dared not risk the happiness of our only child. Forgive me, Richard; do not let your anger fall on the head of Rachel. Let the memory of her dead mother plead for her; she will soon have no other defender."

From these passages it was plain that Mrs. Bently had detected Carus, then, in the act of plundering his uncle and benefactor, and been bound by him, perhaps, as the means of preventing a yet greater crime, by oath never to denounce him. As to the means of the unfortunate lady's death, the doubts which vailed them may never, perhaps, be entirely raised.

After the perusal of such a letter the feelings of the merchant entirely changed. In reality, he had little if anything to forgive. The system of negative persecution adopted towards his son-in-law had led to misery. The long years of agony arising from the loss of our hero might have been spared his daughter.

When the stern man reflected on these things, it is not to be wondered that he fled to Meldown from the sight of Rachel's tears, for conscience told him he had been the cause.

Mr. Bently was seated in the library, listening to the account which the gamekeeper, Fletcher, had brought of the attempted murder at the Home Farm, when his faithful, confidential servant entered the room. The old man seemed greatly agitated, and yet a careful observer might have noted that an expression of hope, if not joy, mingled with his tribulation.

"What is it?" inquired his master. "I did not ring."

"I know you did not, sir," replied the domestic, "but a visitor has arrived at the hall."

"From London?"

"I believe he came from London last," was the cautious reply; "but he has lately been in India."

The merchant sighed at the word India—his dearest hopes, as he believed, were buried there.

"From my old friend Curry, no doubt," he said. "I will see the gentleman."

"Certainly, sir."

Still the man hesitated, and made no attempt to quit the library.

"Did you not hear me?" inquired his master, mildly.

"I don't think the gentlemen comes from Mr. Curry," observed the man; "in fact, I am sure he does not. I have seen him here before, when——"

The speaker stopped short as if afraid to proceed. The grandfather of our hero marked his agitation, and a singular feeling crept over him.

"Proceed," he said; "I can bear anything now."

"When the two young gentlemen were staying at the hall, sir."

"Marsh!" exclaimed Mr. Bently.

"I believe that is the gentleman's name, sir."

"Admit him instantly," said his master; "perhaps he brings me some token or last request from my poor boy."

The domestic hastily withdrew, leaving the merchant a prey to the wildest surmise. Intelligence had reached him that all the party had perished in the attack upon the solitary tower, still he was far from anticipating the happiness in store for him.

When the lieutenant entered the library, he was much struck by the change which little more than a year had made in the appearance of Mr. Bently; his iron-gray hair had become perfectly white, and his features lost much of that expression of firmness, not to say stirnness, which formerly characterized them.

"You come to a house of mourning," observed the old man, extending his hand to him, "I might almost say of death, for life has lost its sunshine and existence—been made a blank. Who would have thought," he added, "that it was so hard a thing to die?"

Marsh seated himself in silence; for a man of the world, never had he felt so embarrassed at the sight of such hopeless misery.

"You may tell me all," resumed the speaker; "describe to me my grandson's death—I can bear it—my heart can feel no second blow. 'Tis strange," he added, with unnatural calmness, "how philosophy increases with age upon us."

"I did not witness the event you allude to," replied his visitor, deeply moved.

"I thought, that is, I understood, you accompanied him upon that fatal journey which——"

THE JOYOUS MEETING.

Despite his boasted fortitude, the firmness of Mr. Bently gave way, and he shed bitter tears of mingled regret and affection.

"You see what a philosopher I am," he said, mournfully. "What a wayward thing the heart is," he continued, after a pause. "Who can comprehend it? For years mine remained deaf to the pleadings of nature—the sorrows of my own child—and yet the loss of my grandson has broken it."

"It was some time," observed the lieutenant, "before I could bring myself to believe in the death of my young charge, the intelligence being anything but precise upon the subject—so many rumors were flying about—one day believed, the next contradicted. To satisfy myself, I resolved to visit that part of the country where it was alleged to have taken place."

"That was kind," said the merchant, "but no more than I expected from you. You convinced yourself?"

"*Nearly so.*"

There was something in the tone in which the words were uttered, and the look that accompanied it, which startled the old man, and the first faint gleam of hope broke upon his heart.

Slowly he repeated the words "Nearly so." "Is it not then a reality? Is there a chance—a possibility that he still lives? Marsh, do not torture me by a suspense kindly meant, but more than I have strength to bear."

"The body was never found."

Mr. Bently clasped his hands, in mute but eloquent gratitude.

"Possibly, he may be a prisoner," added his visitor, who scarcely knew what to say, so greatly did the agitation of the grandfather of our hero terrify him.

"Did you not ascertain?" exclaimed Mr. Bently.

The lieutenant hesitated to reply to him.

"But that shall be my care," continued the old man; "I would have ransomed him with a kingly ransom, with my own life, if necessary. I will trust to no other agent, but proceed myself to India."

"Consider, my dear sir, the distance—your great age."

"I feel neither," interrupted the merchant. "There is a chance of again beholding him, and I am young again—strong in affection and in hope. You will accompany me? I am sure you will."

"Willingly, most willingly," replied Marsh, who felt that, at any risk, it was best to end the agitating scene, "*should the journey prove necessary.*"

"He lives!" exclaimed Mr. Bently, springing from his chair, and grasping the speaker by the arm with an energy that astonished him. "I feel it! I am sure of it! You would not trifle with my white hairs, and insult me by a mockery. Speak—one word, in pity!"

A light step was heard approaching the door of the library. The merchant heard it; it fell familiarly as a thing of old upon his ear, and he stood for an instant like a statue, motionless and spell-bound, but still retaining his grasp upon the arm of the lieutenant, without whose support he must have fallen. Expectation, hope, doubt, fear, all were wrought to the highest pitch, and further delay might have proved fatal, when the door opened, and the next instant Mr. Bently found himself in the arms of his grandson. Marsh quitted the room! he had performed his task, and a weight of anxiety was removed from his heart.

Several hours elapsed before he was summoned to rejoin them, when he found the merchant exceedingly pale from the recent agitation he had undergone; but still much stronger than he expected. The expression of hopeless sorrow had already given way to one of deep content, if not of joy.

"Richard has told me all," were the first words the old man uttered; "I shall soon have a grandchild more to love."

In these few graceful words did Mr. Bently convey his approbation of our hero's choice of Lillian. He also announced his intention of leaving Meldown the following day for London.

"Too soon!" he repeated, in answer to an observation of the lieutenant's, hinting that his strength had already been overtaxed; "not an hour, not a minute. Remember, there are other tears to dry; mine must not prove a selfish joy. I have no longer any excuse for remaining secluded from the world," he continued, with feeverish excitement; "my heart feels strong again. I long to see him in his mother's arms; then, and then only, shall I cease to regret the past."

Impatient as Richard felt for the meeting with his parents, he entreated his grandfather to postpone his intention at least for a day or two longer, fearing the old man's health might give way under so much excitement.

"Remember," he added, "we shall be in time for Christmas."

Something in the mention of Christmas-day appeared to please the merchant, and he at once assented.

It was not till Mr. Bently had been persuaded to retire to rest that Richard Hoffman and the lieutenant returned to the Home Farm to see after their friends and inquire the fate of Andrew Silex.

The steward was dead.

"I trust I shall never witness such another deathbed," observed Jack Manders, who appeared exceedingly pale. "And yet I rejoice I did so," he added, "since it may prove of service to one who is dear to you. The parchment which Mike's companion in crime carried off with him was the long-concealed codicil to the will of the former baronet of Meldown, bequeathing the estates equally between the issue of the two brothers Norman and Allan, in the event of the former dying without male heirs."

"This is most important," observed the lieutenant, "and supplies a key to the motives of Lady Boothroyd. The deed must be recovered at any sacrifice."

"As for the wealth of my late unworthy relative," added the nephew, "he has done something to atone by bequeathing it to Lillian."

"That was your suggestion, I feel convinced," exclaimed our hero, struck by his disinterestedness.

"What better could he do with it?" replied the young man. "My mind was fully made up not to accept a shilling of it. The same objection," he added, "cannot apply to Miss Boothroyd, whom he has so deeply wronged."

Forty-eight hours after the events we have described, there were two persons in London exceedingly puzzled by letters from Meldown Park. The first was the reader's old acquaintance, Peter Mangles. Never in the course of his life had the worthy clerk felt so completely at a loss to comprehend his employer. He perused the missive twice, folded it carefully, placed it in his desk, then drew it forth again to be perused a third, and even a fourth time.

"Dear me, dear me!" he muttered to himself, "what can Richard mean by writing in such an incomprehensible way. I am to order the servants to get his town house ready to receive him in two days; that's plain enough. I can understand his being tired of the country, but what can he mean by this?"

"'I intend to give a large party on Christmas-day, and have despatched the invitations from here. I must trust to you to see that arrangements are made on a scale commensurate with the importance of the affair.'

"What affair?" demanded Peter, to himself, at the same time throwing the letter upon the desk; "how can any man in his senses write in such an unbusiness-like style?"

Again he took up the offending sheet of paper, and finished reading the contents.

"'Congratulate me, my valued friend. I am no longer a lonely being. It is true, happiness comes late; but it has dawned at last.'

"What am I to congratulate him about?" exclaimed the old man, pettishly. "He was rich enough before, and no accession of wealth—even if he has come into any—can bring happiness. He must be mad! but it all comes of living in the country. Men never get such flighty ideas who live in the city."

By slow degrees a dreadful suspicion began to insinuate itself into the brain of Peter Mangles: it was neither more nor less than that his employer had got married. So strong did the conviction grow upon him, that several, certainly not very complimentary nor congratulatory, observations, in which the words "Old donkey," or ones which sounded very like them, escaped his lips.

"Married! he must be married!" he repeated, "nothing but marriage or bankruptcy can explain Richard's writing such an unbusiness-like letter. The old sin, pride, has been at work again. I knew he regretted that Mary was not a boy—as if she could help it. Married! doubtless under the ridiculous notion of having an heir to bear his name. Well, well, well, some artful creature has entangled him in her meshes—a widow, most likely a widow."

So engrossed and upset was the old clerk by this idea, that he absolutely made a wrong entry in the ledger, a thing which had only occurred once before during the many years he had kept the books. His indignation, however, did not prevent his attending to the directions of his employer.

Rachel, too, had received a letter, in which her father invited her, together with her husband and Mary, to dine with him at his residence in London on Christmas-day.

"Let me see you wear your long-forgotten smiles," added the writer, in the concluding paragraph. "I have a present both for you and my granddaughter."

"A present," sighed the mother of our hero; "gold, gifts—alas! what sorrow at one time might they not have spared me!"

CHAPTER XCIX.

CHRISTMAS.

How chilling is the aspect of December, with its gloomy skies and piercing cold, its withered leaves, rustling in time's path, like memories over a graveyard, to remind us that another year is about to pass away—a drop in the vast ocean of eternity.

Apart from the religious influences of the season, even old Christmas would be dreary but for those social feelings, ties and sympathies which encircle the domestic hearth with happy kindred faces, warm the heart by recollections of the past, or smiling anticipations—hope's sunbeams—of the future, waiting, as it were, an earlier spring, rich in affection's flowers amid the snows of winter.

Unfortunately, there are but too many of the human family to whom such consolations are denied—beings whom death has isolated, left like some blighted tree in the world's wilderness alone—sad monuments of sorrow.

Although Rachel could scarcely be classed with these utterly desolate ones, having still the love of her husband and Mary to sustain her, she was almost as much to be pitied, for the worm was at the root of life, poisoning its enjoyments with bitter regrets, the pangs of hope deferred, and the tortures of uncertainty. If her worn features sometimes wore a smile, the expression proved but momentary; the shadow quickly returned, its darkness was in her heart, where, in secret, she continued to mourn the loss of her eldest born, as a mother's heart alone can mourn.

It was Christmas-eve, and the Hoffmans were seated in their elegantly furnished drawing-room. As a matter of course, Peter Mangles was with them, where else could the old man spend his evenings? he had given up his cottage on Blackheath on purpose to be near them. George had become to him as a son, and Mary—it would be difficult to describe the love of the eccentric clerk for the fair and gentle girl, who, as a child, had awakened so deep an interest in his heart.

The impression that his employer either had contracted, or was about to contract, some absurdly provoking marriage, haunted him; he could not dismiss it from his mind; never, in the course of his long existence, had he felt so impatient for the arrival of the morrow, which was to confirm or dissipate his doubts.

Rachel and her husband merely smiled when he expressed them. Apart from the happiness of Mr. Bently, it was a matter of indifference whether they were well-grounded or not, for could wealth have brought happiness, they had more than enough already. As for Mary, she felt delighted with the idea of having a grandmamma.

Peter looked at his watch. It was past eight o'clock.

"Not yet arrived," he muttered; "most unbusiness-like habit; but there, Richard never was punctual—that is to say, of late years. Thinks to surprise us, no doubt; *but he won't surprise me,*" added the old man, with a slight—a very slight—touch of bitterness in his tone. "Well, I have carried out his instructions to the very letter; he will find nothing to reproach me with on that score—all is ready for the reception of the bride.

"Bride!" he repeated with a grimace; "that he should think of such a thing at his years! Why, he is only nineteen months and eleven days my junior. Perhaps it is catching," he added, with a desperate attempt to appear facetious; "if so, I shall be taking a wife next."

"Oh, do—pray do!" exclaimed Mary, throwing her arms playfully round his neck; "I should so like to be a bride's-maid."

"I'll think of it, my love," answered Peter, drily.

Then, overcome by what struck him as a ridiculous idea at his time of life, he broke into a good-humored laugh

"No, no," he added, parting the clustering curls from the brow of the fair girl, and imprinting a kiss upon her forehead, "I must dance at your wedding first."

The happy smile vanished from the countenance of his young favorite, and a pensive expression supplied its place. Rachel was the only one who remarked the change; few things escape a mother's eye.

A carriage was now heard to draw up at the door of the house, and Mr. Mangles began to feel nervously impatient.

"That is Richard," he said.

"It is grandfather's carriage!" cried Mary, who, on hearing the vehicle, had run to one of the windows, and partially drawn aside the curtain to peep into the street.

"With four horses, no doubt," muttered the clerk, commencing a string of commentaries, audible only to himself. "Postilion, with white favors; a giggling maid and impudent valet in the dickey, mocking the *youthful bridegroom*, pitying the bride. What will they say in the city?"

Mr. Bently now made his appearance in the drawing-room.

Although neither George Hoffman nor his wife had paid much attention to the prediction of Peter, they were both struck by the change which had taken place in the appearance and general bearing of the merchant. He had quitted them a broken-spirited man, bowed down with regrets and sorrows. His figure was now erect, and his countenance wore an expression of unclouded joy.

There was something more than usually affectionate in the feeling with which he embraced his daughter, and gazed upon her careworn features.

"You received my letter?" he said, after kissing his grandchild, and shaking hands with her father and the clerk.

"Three days since," answered Rachel, with a faint smile.

"Mine duly came to hand at the same time," observed Peter, drily. "I trust you found everything arranged to your satisfaction?"

"I have not been home yet," replied Mr. Bently. "This is my first visit."

"Good gracious!" mentally ejaculated Mangles, "he has never brought her here!"

"I am tired of the country, Rachel," said her father, "especially at this season of the year, when the heart requires something more than the silent companionship of books and solitary thoughts."

"I never find time for solitary thoughts," observed the old clerk, in a tone which somewhat startled his employer; "and as for books, how any man can complain of them, provided they are properly kept and regularly balanced, is more than I can comprehend."

His hearers smiled; they perfectly understood the books the speaker alluded to—in fact, the only ones that had ever greatly interested him.

Mr. Bently walked towards the fireplace, and leant his head upon his hand for several instants with an air of meditation; evidently there was something upon his mind which he hesitated to disclose. Peter, fully believing in the truth of his supposition, enjoyed his embarrassment exceedingly.

"Now it is coming," he thought.

"You are not very curious, Rachel," observed her father.

His daughter regarded him with a look of surprise.

"Have you forgotten the present I promised you in my letter?"

"Pretty present—a mother-in-law," mumbled the clerk. "Half Mary's fortune gone, at the very least. Well!"

"Have my gifts become valueless?" added the merchant.

"Valueless!" repeated Rachel; "oh, no. You know how fondly I prize the slightest mark of your affection; blessed with that, I have nothing more to desire."

"You must be happy—much happier than falls to the lot of most of us," observed Mr. Bently, with a sigh; "few in this world can pronounce that Heaven has not another blessing to bestow. *What, not one desire? not one?*"

"Father," exclaimed the agitated woman, her eyes instantly filling with tears, "you do not, I am sure you do not, mean these words unkindly, but they wring my heart. Could you read its sufferings, its sleepless regrets, its agonies, you would judge me differently—very differently. If my lips sometimes wear a smile, it is that I may not cloud the joy of others. For years," she added, "my life has been one of sorrow; respect and pity it."

Mary ran to the side of her mother, and, throwing her arms round her, vainly endeavored to kiss away her tears, which continued to fall fast. The seal upon the fountain had been broken.

As for Peter Mangles, he turned very red in the face, used his handkerchief several times, and regarded his employer almost ferociously.

"He has the heart of a crocodile," he mentally ejaculated.

"Mr. Bently, is this wise? is it kind?"

"Silence, George," said the merchant, interrupting his son-in-law. "We sometimes live to regret reproaches, but never our forbearance."

There was something so impressive, not in the words merely, but in the tone and dignified manner of the speaker, that his request was involuntarily complied with. Not another remonstrance or observation was uttered.

"Rachel," continued her father, in a voice which he vainly attempted to render firm, "you will not accuse me of intentional unkindness. You are a mother, and can judge the depth and sometimes *the fear* of a parent's love. It was far from my desire to inflict an unnecessary pang. Would I could have endured it for you."

The features of his daughter suddenly became white as the marble against which the speaker leant.

"God is very merciful, Rachel," he added. "The blessing we too frequently demand with passionate entreaties, sighs and tears, is wisely withheld to be accorded to our resignation."

A piercing cry—it could not be called of joy, scarcely of hope—broke from the lips of the long-bereaved mother, as the import of his words gradually dawned upon her mind.

"You have heard tidings of my boy!" she exclaimed; "I feel it—read it in your eyes, which overflow with tenderness. You are too good—too humane," she added, with increasing excitement, "to torture me with delusive hopes. He lives! say that he lives! a look—a word. I can bear it, father; a mother's heart is strong—oh, how strong! Speak, or suspense will kill me. Richard, my son, my son!"

On hearing his name thus passionately pronounced, prudence—the fear of presenting himself too suddenly—all gave way to the strong impulse of filial love, and our hero entered the drawing-room without waiting for the signal agreed upon between his grandfather and himself.

"Mother, dear mother!" were the only words his agitation permitted him to speak; but there was a spell in them that awoke the long silent echoes in that mother's heart. In an instant her arms were

around his neck; her heart beating against his; her pale lips pressed to the cheek of her lost son.

Kisses, broken murmurs of gratitude, and looks that spoke unalterable affection, were all that passed between them. In that embrace how richly did Richard Hoffman feel all he had endured repaid. To the long desolate mother's heart—but what pen can describe her emotions, as she gazed upon his manly form, read in his eyes a proof more eloquent than words, how fondly her memory had been cherished?

For some time neither the father nor the sister ventured to obtrude their joy; each felt there was a right holier even than theirs—the claim of maternal love.

Rachel did not forget them.

"George," she sobbed, extending her hand to her husband, "our boy—our eldest-born restored free from shame and crime! Mary, your brother!"

The arm of Richard encircled the form of the weeping girl, whose head reclined upon his shoulder.

"Thanks, Lord!" added the grateful woman, sinking upon her knees; "the children that Thou gavest have not been turned from Thee!"

"My son," exclaimed his deeply-agitated father, as he grasped his hand, "I can meet your gaze without a blush: sorrow and an angel's goodness have redeemed me from the drunkard's sin."

"I know all," replied the young man: "your struggles, triumphs. Know how proud I ought to feel to call you father!"

"Come with me to the library, George," said Mr. Bently; "there is still much to be explained. Richard will undertake the task to his mother. Bring Mary with you."

Leading his daughter by the arm, George Hoffman quitted the room, accompanied by Peter Mangles, who kept blubbering like a child. The merchant followed last; as he closed the door of the drawing-room after him, he felt, for the first time for years, reconciled with himself.

"And I," said the old clerk, when his employer had concluded the narrative of his first meeting with his grandson and all that had resulted from it—"I, too, have accused you of want of feeling."

"Hush!" interrupted Mr. Bently, "no reproaches. The best I can say of my conduct is that Providence has been wiser than my resentment."

"But I will reproach myself," exclaimed Peter. "I have a right to do so; you have no idea what a ridiculous old fool I have been. Would you believe it, Richard, when I received your letter in which you spoke of being no longer alone in the world, I took it into my stupid head that you were married! As if any man in his senses," he added, "would do such an unbusiness-like thing at our time of life."

"I was greatly excited when I wrote it," observed the merchant, "for my grandson had just been restored to me; it might have been worded more cautiously."

"But that is not all," resumed Mr. Mangles, who appeared resolved to make a clean breast of it. "Just now, not an hour since, I compared you to a crocodile—to be sure it was to myself—a crocodile!" he added, with solemnity; "not that I ever saw one."

Here the speaker looked as if he considered that not very important fact only increased the atrocity of his conduct.

"I know you will forgive me," he continued, "and that is where I feel it; if I thought you would not, I should not be half so miserable."

"I have nothing to forgive, old friend," replied Mr. Bently, with a smile; "we have jogged on through life too long together, not to bear with each other's failings."

"There is some truth in that, Richard," observed Peter, with what, to those who did not know the simplicity of his character, might have appeared a sly touch of humor. "Well! we must all of us take the good with the evil, and strike a balance, I suppose."

The merchant and his son-in-law both agreed that there was more wisdom in his words than the speaker dreamt of; both felt that all things had worked together for the best.

On returning to the drawing-room, they found Rachel and her son more composed, the violence of their first emotions had subsided, and a placid, deep contentment, such as the heart feels when its best affections are gratified, supplied their place.

As for Mr. Bently, he felt both touched and gratified by the affectionate manner in which his daughter met him—there was an eloquence in her deep, thoughtful eyes far more expressive than her words, as she thanked and blessed him for the care he had taken of his grandson.

As for Peter Mangles, he could not take his eyes from our hero, but sat devouring him with his looks. To such a state of excitement had the kind old man worked himself, that several times he felt obliged to have recourse to his handkerchief to hide the emotion which oppressed him.

"You must love our kind old friend," whispered Mary to her brother; "you know not half the debt of gratitude we owe him."

"You are wrong there," replied Richard; "I have heard it all."

"From grandfather?" inquired the artless girl.

"Partly from him, and partly from another."

"Another!" repeated his sister, with surprise, "who could it be?"

The reply which, like the observation that first led to it, was given in an under tone, brought the rich blush to the cheek of Mary; and yet it consisted but of a single word, which sounded very like Harry.

Time flies swiftly when happiness forgets to count its moments; and the Christmas morn—the day when angel lips first proclaimed peace on earth and good will to man—had dawned before Mr. Bently quitted the house of his son-in-law.

"*This is your home now, Richard,*" he observed, when he bade his grandson good night. "Not a step," he added, as the youth was about to proffer to see him at least to his carriage. "My home will not appear cheerless now; the happy faces I leave behind me will people it with joyous recollections."

"To-morrow, then," said our hero, with a smile.

"We shall meet again with calmer feelings," replied the merchant. "Rachel," he added, as his daughter advanced to receive his good-night, "you will not fail me—I am sure you will not, for I have not forgotten your words—'A mother's heart is strong.' You will encounter strange faces, but kind hearts—those who have loved your son."

Perhaps there were fewer happier persons that night than Mr. Mangles. There was no fear now that the firm would become extinct. George Hoffman and his son would bring fresh energy and youth to it. Everything had turned out as he could have wished; and he foresaw the time when he and his employer might leave the direction of affairs in younger hands. They had toiled long enough.

"I hope they have attended to the boy's book-keeping," he muttered to himself. "Surely, Richard has never neglected that."

"Even if he has," he thought, "a year or two under my care, and—yes, yes—that may be made all smooth."

In fact the old clerk had rather wished that his grandfather might have neglected our hero's education on that important point, so delightful did he feel would be the task of instructing him.

It was not extraordinary that, after the violent emotions she had endured, the sleep of Rachel Hoffman proved a restless one; that more than once she started from her pillow and asked herself if the happiness she felt was real, or whether imagination had not once more cheated her by one of those intensely vivid dreams which mock the sleep of sorrow.

So painful did this uncertainty at last become that she crept stealthily from her couch and, hastily drawing a wrapper around her, proceeded to the room where Richard slept in order to confirm or dissipate the doubt suggested by maternal love.

As her hand rested on the door of the chamber, she heard the object of her solicitude murmur her name in his slumber.

It was sufficient; her heart recognized his voice, and she knelt for an instant to pray and bless him.

In this position her husband, who had missed her from his side, discovered her, and would have tenderly reproached her for thus risking her health, had she not checked the words by placing her finger upon her lips.

"There!" she whispered, pointing to the room, "there! sleeping beneath our roof, all that a parent's love could wish him; noble, truthful, brave, and honest, George, honest; have we not cause to be grateful?"

"We have, indeed," replied the father of our hero; "to our son I owe the re-establishing of my fair name; a better heritage than the fortune my industry may secure him; but this is not the hour, Rachel."

"I know it, George," interrupted his wife; "do not blame me, or deem me childish in my joy; but my happiness seems too great to be real. I doubted it. You are not angry with me?" she added, looking in his face with a smile.

"Angry!" repeated her husband, with emotion; "as readily might the wrecked mariner feel anger at the plank, which bore him through the foaming surge to land; the bewildered traveler at the star, his guide amid the pathless desert's sands, as I with thee."

Our hero and his sister were the first to meet in the breakfast-room on the following morning.

"Richard, dear Richard!" exclaimed the gentle girl, as the arm of her brother enfolded her. "I cannot tell you how happy you have made us, how constantly you have been remembered and prayed for. It was not home without you," she added; "but I never despaired of your return."

"You believed in the promise of my friend Harry, then?" replied her brother, archly. "Poor fellow! the intelligence of my death placed him in a cruel position. I had bound him by a promise."

"Which he kept, I can assure you."

"To the risk of his happiness," observed our hero.

"How can you suppose such a thing," said Mary, blushing at the same time deeply; "why I don't even know his name!"

"Is not Harry a very pretty name?"

"I suppose it is not the only one."

"Morton, the son of an honorable man, one of our grandfather's oldest friends. He was my schoolfellow, companion, friend. You must love him," he added, "for my sake."

His sister looked as if the task would not be a very difficult one, especially after listening to his exculpation.

"You must tell me about Lillian," she said, anxious to change the subject. "Grandpapa named her last night, and I feel so anxious to see her. I feel certain that I shall love her dearly. She must be good as well as beautiful to have won your affection."

"Why so?" demanded Richard, with a smile.

"Because you are good and —— but I must not say that, I might make you vain," answered Mary. "I have nothing left to wish for now that you are restored to us," she continued, gazing fondly in his face. "I feel so proud of you. I used to envy my young companions who had brothers to love, to confide in, to look up to, to protect them, and felt so desolate. But that is past," she added, smiling through the tears the recollection caused her. "I shall never envy any one again."

"I have a vast debt of love to pay you," observed her brother, deeply moved by her artless words.

From that hour there were no secrets between them; each poured into the other's heart the confidence which becomes doubly sweet by being shared.

It was a gratifying sight to Rachel and her husband on entering the breakfast-room, to find their children thus united.

During the morning Jack Manders made his appearance at the house, and was kindly, one might say affectionately, received by the parents of his benefactor and friend, who had informed them of his conduct to Lillian, his grateful fidelity to himself, and the noble constancy with which he had persevered in the path of integrity and truth.

At first the poor fellow felt embarrassed; he had not seen Mrs. Hoffman since the night he so generously defended her from the brutal violence of Carus Kearn upon the bridge. He recollected her only as one poor and humble as himself, and would never have recognized her surrounded by the elegancies and comforts that wealth bestows.

But Rachel had not forgotten him; pride had no place in her grateful heart, and she thanked him warmly for the past.

"This is some debt I am not aware of," observed her son. "Ah, Jack, you have secrets I find from me."

"Pray do not allude to it, sir," replied the young man, more abashed at being praised than ever he had been by reproaches.

"Sir!" repeated our hero; "I call you Jack."

"Mr. Richard—Richard, then," said his too humble friend, deeply gratified. "I knew that you were happy—happy, as you deserve to be; but I wanted to witness it with my own eyes, and as the lieutenant, Lady Bell, and Miss Lillian told me I might venture, I thought——"

"You would renew your acquaintance with old friends," observed Mary, advancing to him, and adding considerably to his embarrassment by placing both her hands in his. "What! have you forgotten me?"

"Little—that is—I mean Miss Hoffman."

"Call me Mary," said the fair girl, with unaffected simplicity; "I like that name the best."

One hour—just one short hour—before the visit to his grandfather, Richard contrived to pass at Mivart's with Lillian; there appeared something wanting to complete his happiness till she shared it with him.

For once, the heart's anticipations were more than realized, and Christmas did, indeed, prove a happy day to the party assembled at the hospitable mansion of Mr. Bently. Sir Charles and Lady Bell met the parents of Richard more like relatives from whom they had long been separated, than strangers; and, after warmly congratulating them, presented their adopted child.

"I must claim a mother's share in your love," said Rachel, as she folded the blushing Lillian in her arms.

"You make me very happy," murmured our heroine.

Mary stole to her side and kissed her, by way of introducing herself to one whom henceforth she was to regard as a sister.

At table, Richard and his friend Harry Morton placed themselves by the side of the fair girls. Every one present seemed to understand the arrangement except Peter Mangles, whom it puzzled exceedingly. He could not comprehend why he had been deprived of his accustomed seat by Mary; and, during the evening, he took an opportunity of drawing her aside to satisfy his curiosity.

"Who is that young man," he inquired, "who appears so very attentive to you? I believe that is the word—attentive," he added, seriously.

"And a very pretty one, is it not?" demanded his favorite, archly.

"Well, yes, perhaps it is, but you have not answered my question."

"His name is Henry."

Peter mentally pronounced it anything but a business one.

"He is a dear friend of Richard's," added Mary. "They were schoolfellows."

"What!" exclaimed the old man, "the mysterious gentleman in the square—the portrait—eh?"

Mary nodded in the affirmative.

"One word. Is he in the city?"

"Of course not, Peter," answered the young lady, with a playful smile; "we are none of us in the city now. Mr. Morton is, or rather will be, a barrister."

And without giving him time to ask another question, the happy creature escaped from him, and joined her brother and Lillian.

Harry was standing near them.

For an instant Mr. Mangles looked very serious; something whispered to him that one of his anticipations were doomed to be disappointed. Mary would not become the wife of a man of business.

The feeling of regret was but a momentary one, and quickly disappeared as he gazed upon her features radiant with happiness. As her glance met his, the old man gently shook his head, and sent her back smile for smile.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

MY MOTHER IS NOT OLD.

BY AUGUSTA HERBERT.

My mother is not old—she went to Heaven
In all the ripened beauty of her years;
No silver threads amid *her* brown hair shone;
Time had not ploughed her cheek by care or tears
And yet my mother's eyes were often dimmed
By tears whose falling God alone beheld;
And life's hard portion she, like others, bore;
And oftentimes with sighs her bosom swelled.

Hers was the lot of earth; as good, as bad,
As in the middle walks of life is found;
But her elastic mind, her loving heart,
Sprang up from sorrow with a quick rebound;
And on her fair young features not a mark
Of age and all its chilling reign was set;
She scarce had touched the boundary of youth—
And strong and young is my dear mother yet.

Forever strong, in her immortal prime,
She cannot stoop, nor fade, nor wrinkle now;
Celestial beauty, like a crown, is set
On her beloved, well-remembered brow.
Her voice of music will not lose its power;
We shall not see *her* sweet eyes slowly fade;
We shall not watch her failing steps go down
To the dark shades by yew and cypress made.

My mother is not old; how bright and fair
Her loved idea shines upon my heart!
All peace—in glory—ransomed in her prime!
Thank God! thank God! though it was *hard* to part.

TURKEY SLATHERS' STORY.

We were sitting around the fire, at night, at Bryan's, listening to the tough yarns of people from the country, who had come to town that day to attend court, and sample Bailey's liquor, when I noticed that my friend, Torquil Slathers, or Turkey, as we called him, by way of abbreviation, did not seem pleased with the narratives. Turkey, although a good fellow among the boys, perfectly able to drink a quart of Cincinnati whiskey at one draught, and totally unconquerable at "old sledge," is by nature and education the foremost spinner of tough yarns in the country, and his friends seriously proposed to run him as Lie-Master General of the district against Corn-juice Pete, but there, as his brother said, "they were too ambitious." Turkey, however, always gives day and date, and furnishes you with the minutest details; and if his stories are not entirely true, they deserve to be. He looked upon the attempts at tales that were made around him as the bungling efforts of incompetent persons to trench on his prerogative, and seemed annoyed that there was no chance for a display of his abilities. At length, after an excessively dubious yarn about a bear-fight on Sandy, Turkey could hold on no longer, but broke out into a perfect freshet of narration.

"See yer, boys," said he, "you nuvver fit a bar in a pen, 'thout dog or gun, or you'd know somethin'. I tell you that's the thing to try a man, if ther uvver was. 'Taint no tacky mar race. I don't purtend to hev more manhood than folks around, an' I won't give up to hevvin' less. I reckin, physically an' sperretually, I'm built on the ginnul patron of my neighbors, whootch it is mos'ly allowed the boys of Logan kin hoe ther way even with enny man, so fur as whiskey, weemen an' war is consairned, 'specially the corn-juice an' fightin'. But I tell you I was badly scairt for wunce in my life; an' furthermore, likewise an' as well, I nuvver think of the affar, thet I don't feel as ef ther wur an even bushil of copper-heads runnin' quarter-races down my backbone.

"I was huntin' over on the Spruce Fork of Coal last Jinniwery, an' meetin' nothin' wuth killin', I tuck up the branch at Chambers's, an' struck over onto Dingess's Run. I met John Dingess's black boy comin' down, an' he allowed ther wur smart sign of deer on Hewitt waters, about the heads of the hollers; so I ups the drain thar, an' that brung me, ez you all know, to the top of the ridge fernent this. You see I perjected to circle round onto Hewitt, me knowin' ef I kep' the top of the ridge, I was obleeged to hev all the way a cl'ar view of the spots whar the deer are like to use. Thar wur about four inches of snow on the groun', thet hed bin shed that mo'nin; but it hed cl'ar'd off sense, an' the frost was tolluble keen, an' hed kivered the yeth's white great-coat, so that it scrunched considerable under foot. I couldn't an' I wouldn't miss deer-sign no how, an' I was sot on kerryin' in a fat buck, ef I hed to hunt the animil by moonlight.

"I crost the head of the Town Branch Hollow, an' clumb to the pint-ridge. I happent to cast my eye down to a spot whar the snow hed drifted pooty much offen the leaves, an' thar I diskivered the track of a moccasin, as I thought at fust, but on cloaster inspexion, I seed it was the foot of a bar. I was immediently cl'ar on two p'ints—fust, that it was a four-ye'r-ole he, an' seckunt, that he hed past afore the snow fell—perhaps about sun-up. Now, I don't like to annex myself to a winter traveler, not frekwently, ennyhow. He aint the nicest customer for a man with narry dog to meet, bein' savage an' hungry, as uvrybody knows, an' chock full of fight, an', like as not, so lean that he uses up a whole acre of middlin's to fry him. But I was cur'us to know what this chap was doin' abroad, instid of takin' up winter quarters in a holler tree, as uvry bar that aint brung up in ignunce does. I 'spected he was out killin' his own pork, an' I allowed I'd be the jedge an' jury in his case, shore. So I follered the sign, wharuvver the snow didn't kiver it, for two solid hours, or tharabouts, an' bimeby I come to the head of a drain whar the rock was layin' about loose in big chunks.

"I kep' a look-out for deer, all the while, an' the fust thing I see was a buck, holdin' up his ten pints sassy, an' sunnin' hisself. He was as big as a two-year-old steer, an' was about a hundred poles off. I slipped along to git him within range, an' seein' a gap betwixt two rocks, I undertuk to lep it. I misreckint the distance about a foot, an' lit on the snow; but instid of hittin' solid groun' at four or five inches, the bottom of the plaist kine of fell out, my gun struck somethin' hard, an' githered itself off for a bust somewhar; an' jest then I heern somethin' drap about nine feet, in the darkest kine of a hole this side of midnight.

"It kine of stunted me, at fust, an' when I got over it I tried to diskiver whar I was, an' how to git out. The plaist was thunderin' dark; there was a leetle speck of light that poked in its nose by the road I come—jest enough to let me see how raly dark it was; but I soon foun' that I'd pitched inter one of them bar-traps of the fool kine—a log-pen, about eight feet squar'. Jest then I heern a growl, an' I lookt, an' see two specks of fire, about as big as a nine-pence, that seemed to be burnin' 'thout givin' light in the middle of a black heap. I felt crawly jest under the skin, for I was ekwainted with the langwidge, an' knowed I was'nt among connexions. A bar had tuk lodgin' thar the night afore, an' had bin snowed in, an' thar we wur, feller-lodgers; but as I hedn't the pleasure of the gentleman's ackwaintance, it didn't foller we wur frien's.

"Ef I'd a hed my rifle I wouldn't hev hankered after the skrimmage, ennyhow. Fightin' a bar, in a eight-foot pen, aint adzactly the kine of amusement a feller'll break his neck to git, ef he kerries a four-hoss waggin load of weepings (weapons); but when he's only got a butcher knife agin the teeth and claws of the animil, 'taint no desgrace to his manhood ef he tries to back squar' out. In sitch cases, when the bar is hostile, ingagement is boun' to be sivere. Preacher Graves says uvry man oughter rassil with the sperret; but I'm shot ef he oughter rassil with the bar, unless he kin git a tremenjous under holt. But thar was no jukin' to be done that hitch. Thar I was, jammed in an augur-hole, an' then screwed in. Ef I 'tempted to climb, there warn't no security but what the onmannerly brute might ettack me in the r'ar, an' perlitely persuade me to partake of his hosspitality. Ef I stood still I might possibly stay thar twell next spring, unless ole Hairy-coat axt me to pervide him with a dinner. I made up my mine without argyin' the main pints of the case, that I war in bad company, an' hed better git out; but whenuver I put my foot inter any kriviss at the side for that purpose, the bar he'd growl so, that I re-considert the matter, an' kep' up a respeckful standin' still. I 'speck the bar war as much scairt as Turkey; but ennyhow, I was boun' over to keep the peace, so I jest loosened my knife, an' stood thar to wait the chances.

"By the time I was let inter the merits of the case, I got a leetle used to the darkness, and manidged to discairn things cl'arer. I saw the bar was scrooched on his r'ar eend in one corner, and seemed in no hurry to move; for he knowed he had it all sot, an' had a dead sure thing. I carfully examintd the spot, an' hevin' made myself master of its construction, I diskivered that escape was onpossible, onless I was holp from outside. You see, the pen, though it hedn't bin used for a coon's age, hed bin built outen heavy oak logs, an' the kiver had bin dropt down cloast onto it, whootch the kiver, hevin' bin made a long time, an' partly outen cowcumber, them paris hed got rotten. Ther wurn't but three pieces of that fool wood in it, an' two of them had proverbly given way onder the bar, who was of a pooty good heft, an' the yuther onder me. Ther was a large enough hole to creep outen, but it was about plum center of the kiver, an' too high to retch. Ef the bar could hev bin coaxed to lie down in the middle of the plaist, I might hev raised myself outen the pit, but the animil wurn't capable of no sitch perliteness. My only chance was to set up a screetchin' like all wrath, for some one to help me out; but as I was about a half mile from a house, an' in a tolluble deep hole, thar wur slim prospex of the noise travelin' the rekwired distance. Still, pore as it was, it bein' the last kerd in the deck to drawr, an' me narry par, I lifted up my voice in the wilderness in a way to make a steamboat whissil feel itself of no account. It seemed to 'stonish the bar powerful, for he tried a han' at the same game. The more I howled the more he growled, an' as Jedge Bailey sez, *vicy varsy*, ontwell my voice grew hoarse, an' at last I couldn't even whoosper, but only jes' go through the motions.

"By this time the sun, as I jedged, hed gone down, an' I foun' myself cast out inter outer darkness, an' so hungry, I could hev taken a bait offen fried ax-hannles. It was cole, I dessay, in the ar outside; but two of us a breathin' in sitch a leetle plaist, made it tolluble warm thar. Still, ther war a creepin' chill goin' over me wunst in a while, whootch I dedn't adzacly fancy. The bar, he seemed to take it easy, an' had done gone to sleep, long afore. I concluded to foller suit, ef possible. But I fust tuck out my knife, an mennedged to fix the hannle in my han', with my hankitcher, tyin the knot partly with my lef' han' an' partly with my teeth. Then I sot myself in a corner, an' tried to trevil to the lan' of nod.

"It wurn't of no manner of use. Sleepin' wurn't to be ded—it wurn't in the kerds. The weather kep growin' colder, an' the fix I was in kep crowdin' on me, so thet I couldn't shet my eyes. I jest went back in my memory to the airliest possible day of my life, an' hed some of the quarest fool thoughts outen jail. I remembered uvry sin I'd uver done—how I'd come it over ole Bilton in a hoss trade; how I'd played kerds up-stairs in the loft, while Rasslin Billy was a preachin' below; how I'd got that Richmunt feller to ford at the deep hole, an' like to drownded the pore, missuble fool, with har on his chin, hengin' down like a billy-goat—an' heeps. The way I groaned ovur my mennyfold enekwities would hev tickled a cirkit-rider mose to death. Uvry now an' then, I'd look over to the corner fernent me, tryin to see the bar through the dark, an' wonderin' whuther he liked the looks of things. An' I was mose desput hungry. I'd a given four aces, an' it a double pot, for a slice offen the bar's ham; an' the way I hankered after a piece of meat an' a pone of bread, was a plum sight.

"I tell you that was the longes' night sense the wurruld fust begun to dissolve on its axles, 'cordin to the fool notions of the feelosifers. It dedn't seem to be an hour lessen ten year; an' I could feel the wrinkles getherin' about my eyes, an' the gray hars a sproutin' on my head, powerful plain.

"Daylight come along at last. I could see no prospex of relief, but I begun a set of yelps, that tuck down ennythin in that line, sense the heathing got busted up at the Tower of Babel. I think them howls were a riglar structer (structure), biggern the court-house. I laid the foundation outen the Indian yell I heern among the Soo, (Sioux), when I was out west two year an' a half afore; but I tell you I put on the upper story an' the roof, in some of the pootiest licks an' mose scientific tetches in the way of scritchin to be heerd on this side of Jordan. Them show-fellers, with the minadjrees, couldn't tetch bottom 'longside of me, wit a faughty-foot pole. The bar, he tried his han' agin, but he guv in dreckly, feelin' ashamed of hisself, for he knowd he wasn't equal to the ocasion. Bime-by, I thought I heern a voice comin' through the hole above—weakly, sorter like a sheep that's bin eatin' ivy. I lissent, an' I made out my name. Folks hed missed me, an' was out sarchin'. But it had snowed some durin' the night, an' 'spose it had kivered my sign. Thunder, sez I. I shouted agin'. The noise come nearer, an' I thought they heerd me, when it got fainter an' fainter, an' I knowd they was offen the track.

"Then I kin tell you, I *did* let off the howlin'. I jest beat myself, an' then I laid down an' cried. I'm dad-fetcht ef I didn't. I poured out the tears, like a pore, missuble sinner as I was, ontwell they run in a steady stream, an' kivered the place two inches deep. I reckin the dampness disturbed the bar, for he riz an' moved to'ards me. I made my knife ready, intendin', ef he wunst gethered me, to fight as long as I could. I didn't fear his teeth a mite; but I knowd them claws of his was akshilly dangerous.

"Jest then I heern Ove Toney's voice above.

"'It 'pears to me,' sez he, 'Turkey can't be fur off, ef I'm a jedge of souns. He's fell from a rock an' broke his leg, I reckin.'

"'By Jove!' sez Clint., 'thar'—(You recollex it, Clint., don't you?)—'By Jove,' sez Clint., 'yer's his rifle.'

"I raised my voice this time—good. Nobody answered—they were all lissnin'—an' I let 'em hev it agin. D'reckly Clint. puts his head down to the hole, an' sez he:

"'Ho! Turkey!'

"I heern a singing-girl wunst to Sensennatty, an' she had a voice as sweet as the jingle of a dollar on a rock, but there was more music in Clint.'s voice jes then, then uvver *she* let out—ef not, you kin take my eyeballs to play marvels with. I norated my fix, in a hurry, an' the boys begun rakin' off the snow in order to pull the pen down. I paid no attention to the bar—in fact, I forgot him; but his feelin's were hurt by the neglec', an' he begun makin' hisself known. The fust thing I knowd, I felt his teeth aworkin' in my left shoulder. It sorter riz me—the broostles on my back begun to raise ontwell you could hev hid a bushel of corn onder my shirt, an' the mad broke out all over me like the measles. I yelled out, for the pain was perfec', an' I struck a powerful angry blow at him with the butcher-knife. It wasn't jedgematically done, an' didn't hit a vital part. It jes riz his wrath, an' made him give me goss. So he drawd down his paw, an' soaked his claws into my meat, in a way to draw about two solid feet of flesh offen my arm. I howled agin, an' tole the fellers how I was helt powerful oneasy. The next wipe he fetched me I knowd nothin' more from that time out.

"Ove an' the rest wur scairt bad at my yelpin', an' me not speakin' afterwards, an' tore away the logs in a hurry. But it was too late. All they foun' in the pen was the bar, who was pickin' his teeth with his claw, a par of hogskin moccasins, a broken butcher-knife, an' about a bushel an' a half of my bones. Boys, let's liqour!"

BE KIND TO EACH OTHER.

BY AUGUSTA MOORE.

People are generally kind enough when they feel like being so. It is *easy* being kind when impulse is all that way, or when one has something to gain by it; but to be kind from principle—*always* kind, kind to *all*—to those not particularly agreeable as well as to those one loves—*that* is quite another matter. And yet that is the only kindness which is of any real value—the only kindness on which one can depend.

Many persons delude themselves into a pleasant belief that they are kind-hearted because they are conscious of being, in certain cases, quickly touched with sympathy, and because, while their fit is on, they say and do a great many very kind and amiable things; but when the novelty of that peculiar distress has worn off, and it lies, an accustomed thing, before them—when it has ceased to cause their hearts to throb, or their eyes to swim, though *not* to cause to its victims all the woe that at first so moved them, do they steadily continue the needed sympathy and aid which at first they so eagerly offered? If they *do*, then are they, indeed, kind, for true kindness is not so much in the sudden flaming up of sympathy, and the impulsive opening of the hand to aid, as it is in the steadfastness of feeling which never glows so hotly as to burn itself out before the cause which fanned it into life is removed. Impulse is good to *start* kindness; but it is only principle that can keep it successfully and constantly in action. Impulse will almost destroy you with the heat of its impassioned embraces and kisses at one moment, and the next it will fling you out to perish in frozen outer darkness, forgetting that you ever lived. But principle, whether it ever declare itself passionately or not, will never disappoint—will never leave you nor forsake you. It is, perhaps, to be regretted that there are rigid and stern beings who deny to the warm and kindly hearts that beat beneath their rock-bound and stern exterior any impulsive action; but on the kindness of men like these one may rely, *almost* as on that of God. Well would it be for the world *were* all as faithful and as truly kind as they.

Men of iron features and of changeless hearts—incomparably are they to be honored above those who sway to every breath of feeling, and weep one moment over the sorrows at which they will laugh or *sneer* the next; and yet how beautiful humanity would be if the granite of truth and principle, and the sweetness, freshness, and attraction of impulse, went together as they ought. Beauty and truth should ever go hand in hand. The semblance and the reality should be together—that which is sweet and winning should never be as a bubble, to break and vanish; or as a false light, to go out in your path when you need it most. Kindness should be constant, or it is *not* kind.

NATIONS in a state of war are like individuals in a state of intoxication; they frequently contract debts when drunk, which they are obliged to pay when sober.

THE CAVERN IN THE SEA.

BY WILLIE E. PABOR.

I have read, somewhere in story, of a strange, mysterious cave,
Hidden in the waste of waters, in the deep heart of the wave;

And the brave one and the daring who would prove its mystery,
Can only find an entrance, through the gateway of the sea.

But, once in the magic chamber—once within the rocky wall,
With the light that from the water is reflected from the hall,—

In the cloister-like enchantment, like a dream of lost Cathay,
One can muse away the moments under Fancy's potent sway.

All the visions that float onward through the horizon of sleep,
Are as nothing to the pictures that before the rapt one sweep;

All the glories of ambition—all the mirage of renown,
Pale before the rising splendor that the heart and spirit crown;

And forever and forever, floating on Enchantment's tide,
The brave one and the daring, in Elysium doth abide.

This is what Tradition tells us. Let it fall from rosy lips,
As before the cheerful firelight muse we on the time that slips,

Like beads from broken rosaries; like pearls from parted bands,
Or the green plains and the palm-trees, in the sunlight of the sands.

And in times like these, the legend of the years so far away
Finds this reflex in the mirror of the drama of to-day:—

In the deep heart of the maiden hidden lies as strange a cave
As ever venturous diver found beneath the troubled wave;

Like the ships that sail unconscious over the Atlantic's lost,
So thousands go by blinded, little knowing what it cost

To collect the untold treasure in the care of woman's love,
That lies waiting for the fairy Prince who will the spell remove.

He must daring be who ventures; if he wins, a victor he
Mightier than all the victors on the page of History.

Through the billows of uncertainty his daring course must lay,
Ere within the hidden cavern he can find an entrance-way.

But, once in the magic precinct—all his trials have a close,
And his heart bathes in the waters of a sure and sweet repose;

And forever and forever, floating on Affection's tide,
The brave one and the loving, in Elysium doth abide.

JENNY JENKINS.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

"No!" said Isadore Bolton, with an imperious stamp of the foot, "I shall *not* want you to attend upon me this evening; nor do I wish you to show yourself at all when I have company. You are becoming too familiar for one in your place. You will keep your room until I call for you."

Jenny Jenkins turned to the window to hide the few tears that would struggle up. She had been sneered at so often for weeping that she used every exertion within her power on the present occasion to keep back the flood.

"You need not pretend that you are very much hurt by what I have said," remarked Isadore, as she saw her maid tremble. "Persons in your situation are not so easily affected. Mercy on me! Things are coming to a pretty pass if our very servants have got to be treated as though they were honored guests."

"Stop, Miss Bolton," cried Jenny, brushing away her tears, and facing her mistress. "I have no such desire, you know very well. I know I am poor and friendless, and that but for your kindness I might be now without a home; but I hope you will not add to my misfortunes by ill-treating me."

"Ill-treating, indeed!" retorted Isadore with a flashing eye. "You are a pert miss, aren't you! I suppose you think that John Lapham loves you. I have no doubt that you imagine he—he—*preferred* you to others whom he had tried to win."

"I have thought nothing," returned Jenny, struggling with all her power.

"And you had better continue to think nothing," resumed Isadore. "John Lapham did once have the audacity to make advances of a peculiar kind to me. His own squandered fortune needed repairing, and he hoped to gain mine; but when I discovered that he was a spendthrift and a libertine, I turned from him as I would have turned from a serpent."

"A spendthrift and libertine!" repeated Jenny, turning deathly pale.

"Aye—did you not know it? I thought it had become notorious. But say—I hope he has not been working upon your poor foolish heart. When he sought me it was for my money; but if he seeks you, it must be——"

"Stop!" groaned Jenny. "Oh! do not say anything more."

With a look of malignant satisfaction upon the bowed girl, Isadore Bolton turned from the room, and Jenny was left alone. She threw herself upon the couch, and there she lay and wept for a long time; there she lay until night came on, and until the sound of music came up from the large parlors, where a brilliant party were assembling. Later in the evening she walked out into the garden to get a breath of fresh air. The moon was up, and a gentle breeze, laden with the sweet fragrance of a thousand varied flowers and blossoms, came sweeping softly over the scene. She sat down upon one of the mossy couches, and ere she had been there many minutes she heard her name pronounced. She looked up, and beheld John Lapham.

"Jenny," he said, in a serious tone, "I have been searching for you."

She looked up into his handsome face—she gazed upon his manly form, clad in simple but costly attire—and her heart throbbed painfully.

"Mr. Lapham," she replied, speaking as calmly as she could, "why should you seek me? You move in a circle far above the station I occupy, and your associations are far removed from mine. Let our acquaintance cease here; it may be better for both of us."

"At least," returned the young man, taking a seat by Jenny's side, "we will understand each other before we part." He hesitated a few moments, and then he resumed—

"If this should be the last time we meet, let us at least part understandingly. I sought you this evening for the purpose of making everything clear. I am an orphan, as you well know, and am alone in the world. My parents left me with some money, and I went into business. In worldly matters I prospered, but I had no home. I wanted a companion—some one to love, and to love me. I saw Isadore Bolton. She was called beautiful and witty. She threw herself in my way, and gave me the most flattering attention; but when I came to read her character I feared to trust my happiness with her. She is—— But never mind. I could not love her as I would love the most precious companion man can have. I saw you—I saw you in an humble position—but it was the person and not the position I sought. You put me in mind of my mother when you moved before me, and when you spoke and smiled you seemed like the dear sister I had lost. So I learned to love you, and I fondly believed that you would be to me all that the most ardent soul could desire. I knew you were an orphan; but I knew nothing of your history beyond that, nor—do I know now."

He spoke hesitatingly as he closed, and seemed to be troubled. Jenny saw it, and she quickly answered—

"You should have thought of that before. I am a child of poverty and misfortune, and not suited to the station you must occupy."

"But what is this misfortune?" cried Lapham, eagerly. "I care not for poverty, for in the sight of Heaven man is worth only the soul he bears with him; and in that I believe thou art rich. But of this misfortune—pardon me, let me speak plainly this once: Does it leave any stain upon you? Does it——"

"Stop," groaned the maiden. "Ask me no more. Let us part now. I can be no more to you."

"Say not so, Jenny. Am I not all you could wish? Could you not love me? Why don't you answer? Surely, you have loved me."

As the young man gazed into her pale face, and saw how she shuddered and trembled when he asked her this question, a new thought flashed upon him.

"Has any one spoken to you concerning me?" he asked, in an earnest, hurried whisper. "Has any one spoken against me?—You tremble. There has been some story told to you. Perhaps I have its counterpart. Has Isadore Bolten spoken of me?"

"Yes," answered Jenny, now resolved that she would tell all. "She told me that you were a spendthrift and a libertine."

"Did she say that?" whispered Lapham, starting as though something had stung him.

"Yes; and she said she refused your company on that account."

"Oh, God forgive her And she has poured a long story into my ear of you, sweet Jenny But now tell me of your early life. Will you not trust me with it? If you would know of my manhood, I shall refer you to those who know me best; but the story of your life I would have from your own lips."

Jenny hesitated at first, but inally she resolved to tell it all. Her companion took one of her small white hands, and held it in both his own while she spoke. She told him of her earliest childhood—of dark days and of dark nights—of want, of misery, of degradation, and of sorrow; and then she told of the later years—of trials, and of struggles; but through it all—from the hour of her birth up to the present—she had never swerved from the right. With her hand upon her heart she could look up to her God, and trust in Him without fear or shame.

"Bless you!" cried the youth, when she had finished. "I believe you; and in return I only ask that you will believe me when I say that all is false which speaks against my character as Miss Bolton has spoken against it."

They walked in the garden till a late hour, and when they finally separated they were as happy as they could be. They understood each other perfectly, and no more falsehood could annoy them. John Lapham, with a soul above dishonor, and a heart above selfishness, clasped the beautiful, gentle Jenny to his bosom, and gave her his plighted faith because he knew she was the woman he needed to make him happy and peaceful. And she, with a heart that knew no guile, trusted in his manhood, and loved him devotedly.

Within the large parlors all was life and animation. Isadore Bolton was among the gayest of the gay, for she believed she had made a new conquest, and if it was a conquest, it was a valuable one. Among the new arrivals in the town was that of George Arlington. He had lately come from Texas, where he had amassed an immense fortune in successful land speculation. Of this there was no question, as his banker was a native of the town, and had charge of the funds. And then Arlington was only six-and-twenty, and was, moreover, exceedingly good-looking. In short, he was a gentleman of polished and refined manners, and no person of observation could be in his company any length of time without discovering that he possessed a kind and true heart. Isadore made sure that he was free from any matrimonial engagement, and then she laid siege to his affections. She talked with him, she laughed with him, she danced with him, she played and sang to him, and when she fancied that she had drawn the magic cord well about him she ventured to pout a little, and toss her head disdainfully when he bestowed any attention upon other fair ones.

Isadore was handsome, and she had some wit and some intelligence. Her mother was a widow, and she an only child; and though they had been left with quite a snug little fortune some ten years before, yet it had sadly dwindled away now. The life they had led had been an expensive one, and it had cost something to give the many brilliant parties, which had been meant for traps wherein a rich husband might be caught.

"Well, my child," said Mrs. Bolton, after the company had all gone, and the two were alone, "how do you prosper?"

"Well—well," replied Isadore, "I have him safe enough. I know he is fast. He will propose when I give him an opportunity."

"Then you had better give him that opportunity at once, child, for we cannot hold out much longer. My purse is well nigh empty. Do not let him slip as you did John Lapham."

"If you love me, mamma, don't mention that man's name again. I feel that I am well rid of him. He hasn't more than fifteen thousand dollars at the utmost, while Mr. Arlington has ten times—aye, twenty times that amount. It was a blessing that I got him off in season."

"And will he make an offer to Jenny Jenkins, think you?"

"What—*he?* Preposterous! He may toy with her—he may deceive her—but I have placed her on her guard, and she will be to blame if she suffers."

"There was no need of that, Isadore," said Mrs. Bolton, with a strange look. "I think we had better be rid of that girl. She is young—two years younger than you are—and beautiful. Her beauty is of a style far different from yours, and the contrast calls attention to it. I cannot help fearing that it was her face that first turned the eyes of Lapham from you."

"True, she has beauty," responded Isadore, with a vengeful air, "but it is not a kind that can be very dangerous to any one save herself. However, I have held the same opinion which you have expressed. I do not want her with me. We have had her long enough. We took her when she was poor, houseless and ragged, and now she is getting above us all."

It was finally settled between the mother and daughter that poor Jenny—the girl who had been so faithful and true—who had borne with their whims and caprices without murmuring—should be set adrift. And it was furthermore settled that George Arlington should be caught and secured as soon as possible.

John Lapham kept one of the best stores in the town, and it was natural that Arlington should make his acquaintance. In fact, this was about the first acquaintance he did make, and it soon ripened into a warm friendship. The tastes of the two men were congenial, and they had many likes and many dislikes in common. The first act of Lapham's which had drawn Arlington's attention was his flat refusal to taste a glass of wine.

"Don't you ever use it?" asked George.

"Never," was the reply of the young merchant. "I promised my mother, upon her death bed, that I would not, and I never will."

Arlington extended his hand, and with a warm, friendly grasp he responded—

"I stand just there. I made the same promise to my God when I was a boy, and I have kept it to this day."

And from that hour their friendship was sealed.

"John," said Arlington, as the two were together one day, "they tell me that you are making love to a little fairy who lives with Mrs. Bolton. How is it?"

"Are you poking fun at me?" asked Lapham.

"No, upon my soul I am not. And I'll tell you why. They tell me she is a mere servant there, and a penniless orphan to boot. Now I know you well enough to know that no power on earth could induce you to harm such a creature, so, if you really seek her hand, you do it from love, and from a love which must be pure and noble."

"Thank you, George," replied the other, warmly. "I do love the poor orphan, and I mean to make her my wife, and though I may not get so rich a prize as you will get in the mistress, yet I shall be satisfied."

"Umph!" muttered Arlington, with a shrug of the shoulders. "We won't talk of Miss Bolton now. Yet allow me to say that I think her a very fine girl; but I would know her better before I commit myself. And in the meantime I would see your little Jenny. I caught a glimpse of her sweet face as she passed through the hall last evening, and it interested me. Don't be jealous, man, for I assure you I will give you fair warning if I mean to make love to her. But she did really interest me. I have seen some one, at some time, somewhere, whom she resembles, and the resemblance touches a cord near my heart. I must see her again."

"Don't let Isadore know that you seek the acquaintance," said Lapham, with a smile.

"Ah—is she apt to be——"

"Tut—I meant nothing. Can't you take a joke?"

"You spoke not like one in senseless jest," returned Arlington, somewhat soberly, "but I won't question you. Ah," he added, looking at his watch, "it is past eight. I promised to be at Mrs. Bolton's at that hour. Your fairy must be beautiful indeed if she can draw me from my allegiance to her lovely mistress; but you must be surprised at nothing."

With a laugh he went away, and if Lapham allowed a fear to cross his mind, it was quickly banished when he remembered how honorable his friend had thus far proved himself.

Isadore was expecting her visitor, and she was prepared to do her utmost to captivate him. She met him with one of her sweetest smiles, and at the end of an hour he was completely entranced. So carried away was he by the arts of the beautiful schemer, that he might have spoken that magic word which would have committed him to the fate laid out for him, had not a circumstance happened to turn the tide. Arlington held one of Isadore's hands in his own, and was upon the point of saying something very tender, when the door was unceremoniously opened, and Jenny Jenkins entered the apartment. Isadore was completely thrown from her guard by this unexpected visitation, and allowed her passion to gain the mastery over her.

"What now?" she cried, starting to an upright position, and gazing upon the intruder with a flashing eye. "How dare you come in here unbidden!"

"Excuse me, Miss Isadore," murmured the poor girl, trembling with apprehension. "Your mother sent for me, and I thought she was in here."

"You thought no such thing!" retorted the angry belle. "You knew we were here."

"Indeed——"

"There! I want no more words. Leave the room!"

Jenny cast a look, half of pity, and half of astonishment, upon the imperious maiden, and then turned away.

For awhile after the gentle orphan had gone there was a cloud between the pair who were left. Isadore saw the mistake she had committed, and she resolved to mend it if possible.

"It is annoying to have such rude, unmannerly servants about," she said, as soon as she could recover her composure.

"Who is that girl?" asked Arlington, seeming to have been startled from a deep reverie by his companion's remark.

"Only a poor orphan to whom we have given a home," replied Isadore. "She is a great trial to us."

"An orphan?" repeated George, still busy with his own thoughts. "Where did she come from?"

"That is more than I can tell you, Mr. Arlington. She came from a long way off, I expect; and she probably has good cause for keeping her parentage a secret. At all events, she cannot be induced to say anything upon the subject. However, we do not allow her shame to stand in the way of our giving her a home."

"Shame, did you say?"

"It may be inherited, you know. I meant, only, that she must be ashamed of her early life."

"Ah—yes—I see," said Arlington; and then he fell to thinking once more. Isadore did all in her power to bring him out again, but she could not succeed, and at the end of half an hour he took his leave. He promised to call again, but Isadore saw very plainly that the string was broken, and that a new effort would have to be made. She retired in an angry mood, and passed a sleepless, unhappy night.

On the next day Jenny Jenkins was summoned to the presence of Mrs. Bolton, and informed that her services would, for the future, be dispensed with. Isadore had just commenced a torrent of abuse, and was lashing herself into a furious passion, when a servant appeared and announced that Mr. Arlington was below. She calmed herself as quickly as possible, and hurried away to her dressing-room, while Jenny slipped out into the passage.

"It's you the gentleman wishes to see," said the chambermaid, who had just come up.

"Me?" whispered Jenny.

"Yes. He wants to see you right away."

The poor orphan had seen the handsome face of the visitor, and she had dreamed strange dreams over it; and now, without knowing the import of the sudden impulse that seized her, she hurried down. In one of the drawing-rooms she found Mr. Arlington, and when he arose to greet her she trembled from head to foot.

"Miss Jenkins," said the young man, "pardon me for this seeming intrusion; and pardon me also for the further liberty I have resolved upon. Be seated, and answer me as you deem proper; only believe me, I am actuated by something more than curiosity. First—let me ask you: Is your name really Jenkins?"

The poor girl trembled like an aspen, and her hands were clasped convulsively upon her heart. Arlington moved to her side, and took both her hands in his.

"Trust me," he said, in a deep, earnest tone, while the light of his dark eye burned with a fervent, hopeful glow. "Tell me your story—tell me the whole truth—and if it is as I—I—as I hope it is, I may find a friend for you. You are an orphan, Jenny?"

"Yes, sir," she replied. She gazed up into his face as she spoke, and she knew she might trust him. She was urged on by a power she could not control, and, without a thought of reserve, she told her simple story.

"I am an orphan," she said, with her head bowed, "and misfortune marked me for its own from my birth. My mother died when I was a mere child—I can barely remember her—and I was left to a life in those early years worse than death. My father was a drunkard—a poor, depraved drunkard—and I suffered all the shame a drunkard's child can suffer. He beat me, and made me beg for him, and yet I tried to love him. Finally, when I was ten years old, he got into trouble in one of his drunken spells, and was cast into prison. Still I clung to him; but he died in that narrow dungeon, and I had no friend or home. When I told people my name they called me a drunkard's child, and I ran away from the town, and was afraid to tell my name. A poor woman gave me a home, and also gave me her name. I lived with her two years, and then she died, and Mrs. Bolton took me."

"And your name is not Jenkins?" whispered the young man, eagerly.

"No, sir. That was the name of the woman who first took me. My name is the same as yours."

"It is! Oh—I knew it. You lived in Mayfield?"

"Yes, sir."

"And don't you remember your brother?"

"Yes, sir, I do. He ran away after my mother was buried, and I never saw him again."

"And why did he run away?"

"Our father beat him because he cried for his dead mother. He told me he was going; and he said he would come back some day and help me."

"Aye—that brother went to sea—he went to Europe—he went to New Orleans—he went to Texas—he became wealthy—and he has come back to love, and to bless his dear sister!"

Jenny had felt it—she had felt it in her soul from the first—and when his arms were wound about her, she laid her head upon his bosom, and wept with a joy such as she had never felt before.

At this juncture the door was opened, and Isadore Bolton entered. She gazed a moment upon the strange scene before her, and then tried to go into hysterics; but her passion was too pointed for that, and she commenced to rave at the faithless pair.

"Stop, lady," spoke Mr. Arlington, rising to his feet. "You do wrong to us both. When I suffered myself to be detained here I was on my way to a distant town to seek for a long-lost sister. But I have found her here. I hold her in my arms now. This fair girl's parents were my parents. Let this explanation suffice for the present."

* * * * * *

Isadore Bolton gradually recovered from the shock she had received; but she could never forgive Jenny. The only two wealthy lovers she had ever trapped had been both snatched away from her—one to be Jenny's husband, and the other to be Jenny's brother—and she was left to fade and worry until she finally succeeded in springing her matrimonial trap successfully upon a bald-headed old man who had plenty of money, plenty of gout, and plenty of temper; but who yet had such a hold upon life that Isadore never lived to be a rich widow, as she had at one time fondly anticipated.

As for Jenny, her dark days were passed; and beneath the kind smiles of her husband and her brother she created social and domestic sunshine enough to lighten the lone-path of the whole neighborhood in which she lived.

THE SAILOR'S FALL.

AN ADVENTURE AT VALPARAISO.

BY AN OLD "SALT."

Few Americans have visited Valparaiso who have not heard of a remarkable fall, from one of the hights of that town, made some years ago by one of our sailors. I had been told of it, at different times, by several of my friends, and afterwards accidentally learned the particulars from an eye-witness, who, it so happened, was shipmate and shore companion of the unfortunate sailor, the hero of the story. His account of the adventure was given in substance as follows:

After our ship had lain some time at anchor in the harbor of Valparaiso, I got leave to go ashore one day with some of my shipmates, and we landed in the boat, with the prospect of a pleasant time. We had agreed to ramble about the town, and take a walk into the country beyond it, as we felt much curiosity to explore so singular a place as it appeared to be. There is a line of storehouses near the water, but the main part of the buildings of the town lie in several ravines between the hills, which rise very steep from the shore, while a few private residences of wealthy merchants and others are seen above. The ground presents a very irregular and broken appearance from whatever side it is seen, and the view from the shipping is remarkably fine, as the range of the Andes is distinctly in sight far behind, extending to the right and left as far as the eye can reach, and rising, like an unbroken wall, up to the clouds.

We passed up one of the ravines by a street which rises gradually towards the hights, one of which is called by sailors the Maintop, and walked about for several hours, looking out upon the Pacific ocean, upon the extensive country inland, nearly destitute of habitations, cultivation and trees, sometimes admiring the immense chain of distant mountains, and sometimes wondering why the people should have chosen so rough a piece of ground for their town, where they had been obliged to build their houses and run their streets in the most inconvenient places possible. Before we turned again towards the shore, my companions complained of being thirsty, and stopped a while at a little shop to drink *chicha*. One of them, soon afterwards, began to show some effects of that spirituous liquor, by a somewhat irregular gait. We went on, and nothing remarkable occurred beyond the common appearance of sailor jollity, until we reached a part of the road which we had observed in going up as very remarkable. It was one of those places where the ground was most steep, and there it was quite perpendicular, while nothing was to be seen like a wall or fence to prevent a passenger from falling. Just below were several of the poor houses, or rather hovels, of the poorer people, which are built of very light materials, and covered with a loose thatch. I should be afraid to give a guess at the hight of the path above them, lest it should seem incredible. I will only say that it was much greater than I should be willing to descend without great caution.

We pushed along, talking and laughing, until one inquired, "What has become of Jack?" Then, looking about, I discovered that our jolliest companion was missing. But I must stop a moment, to give a few particulars necessary to be known, before one can well understand what had become of him.

Among the houses standing at the foot of the hill was one of the poorest, perhaps, in Valparaiso. It was very small and low, covered with a coarse thatch, which was supported, I believe, by a few slender sticks, or timber branches of trees. The inhabitants were the family of a poor laborer, who, at that time of the day, always took their afternoon meal. They were then seated at table, with an enormous dish placed before them, containing their customary food, which is a kind of stew or broth, eaten every day by all the lower classes of people. At the moment when they were ready to begin, a strange sound was heard over their heads; the roof of their humble dwelling was violently shaken, and instantly burst through. Their first impression was one of superstitious fear, for the belief in evil spirits is universal among that people, and they would have risen from their seats and fled with horror, if they had had time to escape, especially as the roof seemed likely to come down upon their heads. But in a moment a large body fell through the opening in the thatch, directly on the middle of the table, with a tremendous shock, into the great dish of broth, which was scattered about in all directions, and, being hot from the fire, stung their faces and hands wherever it touched them.

But to return to our shore-party. On missing our companion, we had concluded that he must have fallen from the hill, and immediately ran down as fast as we could. There we arrived in time to witness a laughable scene. The poor family were in the street, with the appearance of people almost dead with fright, their neighbors running up to inquire what was the matter, and, to crown all, Jack, hobbling out of the hut, half-stunned with his fall, half-scalded with the hot broth, making strange gesticulations and exclamations, and looking bewildered, first at the strange people around him, some of whom seemed to threaten his life, and then at his shipmates, who were so overcome with laughter that they could not speak. The natives soon began to demand the payment of damages, and crowded round us in a menacing manner; but when we drew up, and showed a readiness for resistance, they made no attack, and we proceeded unmolested to our boat, and back to the vessel.

DID YOU EVER?

Did ever you go into the presence of one whose face, hitherto, never failed to brighten at your approach—of one whose features you had never seen contracted by a frown, or cold with indifference, when turned towards *you*, only to meet an aspect of clouds and gloom? If so, how did it make you feel? Was you not struck, instantly, with a chill?

Yes, you can remember how it was—there is little doubt of that; and you never want the experiment repeated. There is no obscurity of the heavens, there is no blackness of the night, that can make such gloom as the vail that an angry or a changed heart can hang before the face of one you love, and who has, until now, always seemed to love you. Anything, *anything* of earthly anguish can be better borne than the loss of the love and friendship of *one you love and thoroughly believe in.* And when you have had cause to dread that your friend was changed—that his eye, indeed, beamed fondly, and with the kind approval of old, *but not on you*, and when you have found that your great and dreadful fear was groundless—that he was *not* changed, were you not happy—almost as if you had seen into Heaven, and heard the dwellers there naming *your name* as one that was written in the Book of Life?

Friendship and love: *true* love—unchanging and kind like that of Heaven—what *would* this weary world be were *these* to forsake it and not return!

SCENES OF OUR BOYHOOD.

What must have been the feelings of Napoleon when, after a battle with the Allies in 1814, he found himself under the very tree at Brienne, where he had read "Jerusalem Delivered" in his youth. He would no doubt have exchanged all the splendors of his turbid existence to recall those times again. How delighted was Johnson on visiting, just before the close of existence, the same willow-tree at Lichfield which he had known in his boyhood. Waller, in his old age, bought a small house and a little land at Coleshill, that he might return again to the place of his early recollections, and "die like a stag where he had been roused." How many similar instances might be quoted of attachment to the times of youth. We revert to them in the last period of existence, as if we would fain run our course of years over again, and yet this is really the case with very few of us—we love them, perhaps, because the innocence and artlessness of youth give us more satisfaction, upon reflection, than the artifice and selfishness of intervening years.

MATTER-OF-FACT MEN.

Matter-of-fact men, who deal only in the tangible, are of the earth earthy: the natural is their sphere—they deal in cubes and blocks—they must see and touch, to believe. They ever gravitate to the center; their looks are always "downward bent," and they enjoy no "visions beatific." Their groveling and heavy imaginations are unequal to mounting with the "sightless couriers of the air." They see only with "leaden eyes that love the ground," and if they dream, they dream by rule and compass. The eye that "doth glance from Heaven to earth, from earth to Heaven," is to them the organ of a distempered brain. Where should we arrive if we considered human nature only in the mere matter-of-fact way it exhibits itself in the world—a thing of petty interests, selfish, overreaching, deceitful, infirm and perishable?—if we always kept to the reality of the picture, and contemplated it in its naked truth?—if we could not mark out nobler destinies for it than its realities show, and fill up the defects of what is, with the images and desires of what would render existence more delightful? What a glorious light flashes on the offspring of imagination, the herald of a more perfect state of things existing somewhere!

AUTUMN SONG.

BY C. D. STUART.

The sun is risen o'er the plain,
O'er the lea;
Happy birds rejoice again,
Merrily;
Up the sky on rested wing,
Soaring from the earth they spring,
Glad and free;
Kine are lowing 'mong the hills,
Sheep-bells tinkle to the rills,
Joy from earth and air distils,
Goldenly;
Speeds the farmer with his wain,
Gathering the ripened grain;
Vine and tree
Drop their golden fruitage down;
Lo! the forest shakes his crown;
Happy children hunting mast,
Share with squirrels sweet repast,
Full of glee;
So the Autumn day is sped,
Plenty, joy, and beauty wed—
Blessings on its ample head!
Like the bee,
Man has gathered in his store,
Let the Winter rail and roar,
Full the crib, and full the bin,
Ugly Want may not come in,
No, not he!

LOST UPON THE PRAIRIES.

AN ADVENTURE IN WESTERN TEXAS.

We had had a day of exciting sport, as was evident by the shaggy robes that lay in a pile upon the ground, awaiting the stretching process on the morrow, and the festoons of red meat, hanging from limb to limb of the great trees.

With quickened pulses, and appetites sharpened by the healthful exercise and the pure breeze of the plains, we had gathered, a cheerful group, around our camp-fire. In front of the glowing embers large, juicy slices of young buffalo-meat were roasting, and filling the cool, evening air with a hunger-provoking fragrance.

We were a wide-awake little party, who, the day before, had established our camp in a beautiful grove of oaks, in the midst of the buffalo range, which extends from the upper Brazos to the head waters of the Neuces, and westward to the banks of the Rio Bravo.

Our suppers were soon disposed of, and each man having filled his clay pipe, placed himself in the most convenient position for a comfortable enjoyment of the fragrant weed.

We had in our company a number of old Texians. These men, whose experiences were many and exciting, were always ready to amuse the circle around the camp-fire by the recital of them; and Ben Walker, an old, practical man, was now called upon for a story.

"Very well, boys," was his prompt reply, "I have no objection to spin a short yarn, if it will be any satisfaction; and if I can't amuse you, perhaps I can talk some of you asleep.

"As I have been laying here, looking out upon this calm scene, which looks as if a storm had never visited it," continued the old hunter, "I could not help calling to mind the time, many years ago, when I was lost out here, upon this same prairie, but a little more to the westward."

"You must know," he went on, "that I first came to this country in '21; a time when no white men had settled anywhere west of old Fort Gaines, in Louisiana. My mother and only sister having suddenly died, and the old, familiar scenes at home becoming cheerless to my father, he sold the place, and accompanied by myself and a few of the old family negroes, started a small plantation on the Sabine, near Gaines' ferry, on the old San Antonio trail. But after Col. Austin established his colony at San Felipe, on the Brazos, we pulled up stakes, and for the sake of American neighborhood, settled on that stream. It was while journeying from the Sabine to our new home that I first beheld one of those glorious expanses of waving verdure, over which I had so often longed to spur my steed.

"Between the Sabine and the Trinity, we had traveled over rolling prairies of small extent, frequently interspersed with timber islands, and skirted with thick groves of oaks and sweet gums. But it was not till we had passed the latter stream, and cleared the tangled forest which springs from its prolific bottom, and extends for miles westward, that we struck the extensive prairies of Middle Texas. Here, far as the eye could reach, it could take in nothing but green, extended plain, and the blue, cloudless sky above. For days we rode through the grassy waves of that verdant sea, encamping at night in the little knots of live oaks, where we were always sure of finding a gushing spring, or standing water.

"But when I afterwards heard, from our Mexican neighbors, of these still wider plains, where, for days and days, one might travel, out of sight of land, as it were, I determined to join some party of native traders, bound from San Antonio, and from thence to Matamoras, to behold this wonderful region.

"I was not long waiting for the coveted opportunity, for it was about the season for the buffaloes to come down to feed upon the mesquite grass, and as there was danger of encountering parties of Indians out upon their winter hunt, my company was gladly accepted, as adding one more to their number, and so far increasing their means of defense.

"The day we passed the Neuces, as the sky was overcast with clouds, and a norther threatened to come down upon us, we made an early camp, in the last clump of timber to be found for many leagues west of that portion of the river.

"While I was in the act of stripping my horse, previous to pinning him out to grass, I happened to cast my eyes over the prairie, and detected, in the distance, a small herd of buffaloes, moving leisurely towards the narrow belt of timber which, not far off, marked the course of the river. Their instinct prompted them to seek the wood for protection against the chilling breath of the approaching storm.

"I had never yet killed one of those animals, although long ambitious of doing so. Therefore, hastily re-tightening the girth of my saddle, I remounted, and giving spur to my horse, bounded swiftly over the prairie in chase of the herd. They were moving from the westward, while our camp was south of their line of progress. So, striking off obliquely to the northward, I hoped to intercept them long before they could reach the timber.

"The weather, as is always the case previous to a winter norther in this region, was excessively close and sultry; not a breath of air was stirring, and the buffaloes, therefore, were traveling but slowly, and occasionally halting to snatch a mouthful of the rich mesquite grass as they moved along.

"Keeping a slight swell of the prairie between them and myself, I had come almost upon them before they caught scent of me. Then pricking my half-breed to his utmost speed, I dashed in front of the now excited animals, and halting for an instant, leveled my rifle, and singling out the leader of the herd, fired. The huge animal shook the leaden pellet from his shaggy brow, as if it had been a fly only, (for I had foolishly aimed at his only invulnerable part,) and, with a maddened roar, kept on his course.

"My horse, as much unused to the chase as myself, now became alarmed, and before I could recover the reins, dashed directly across the path of the frightened animals. Seeing the imminent danger we were in of being thrown down by the headlong crowd, and trampled beneath their thundering tread, I buried the rowels deep into his panting flanks, hoping to clear the herd, and pass beyond on the northern side of it. I had almost succeeded in doing this; the leading animals had rushed past me; but as I was upon the point of congratulating myself upon my fortunate deliverance from a fearful death, a sudden turn, taken by the leaders of the herd, followed, of course, by those in the rear, brought a huge cow in collision with my horse.

"I felt myself dashed headlong from my saddle, and for an instant borne rapidly along; a crushing, stunning sound filled my ears; I have an indistinct recollection of clinging for a moment to a hairy prominence, and then a sensation of flying through the air, and being dashed breathlessly upon the ground.

"I know not how many hours I lay in this condition, but I was at length aroused to consciousness by a sensation of pain, which, dull and heavy at first, began by degrees to increase in intensity; and when I was fairly awakened to the knowledge of my situation, it became excruciating.

"I was alone. Darkness surrounded me. The skies over me were black with lowering clouds, and the fierce norther, which had been threatening us, now swept in wrath over the wide prairie.

"My clothes were saturated with the freezing rain, and every joint in my body was stiffened by the cold. With a painful effort, I raised myself into a sitting position. My left hand, on attempting to use it, I found was helpless; the forearm was badly fractured and swollen. With another effort I tried to gain my feet, for I knew that death was inevitable if I remained where I was, upon the damp ground, exposed to the merciless norther. The cold was extreme, and the air was thick with the wintry sleet. At length, after several ineffectual trials, I stood erect. My limbs, with the exception of my broken arm, were uninjured by my fall. I made a sling with my handkerchief, in which I found some relief for the fractured member, and then, turning my back to the cutting wind, started, as I supposed, in the direction of the camp.

"I remembered the course I had ridden to intercept the herd, and the relative position of the timber, where I had left my companions, and had no doubt I could walk directly to the fire.

"I had gone but a few yards when I stumbled against something, which gave out a metalic sound; and groping in the dark, I found my rifle. But I was too weak to carry it; I drove the end of the barrel deep into the wet soil, with the breech uppermost, and moved on.

"A little farther, and I distinguished, directly before me, the outlines of a dark body lying upon the ground. It proved to be my poor horse; he was dead. Poor fellow; it had gone harder with him, than with his master. I managed to unstrap my blanket from the saddle,—and taking it, with my water gourd, which still remained attached to the pommel, and unbroken, started forward.

"I continued to travel painfully along; still keeping the storm behind me. But no cheering camp-fire greeted my longing eyes. Could I have passed the little grove, in the darkness? I had certainly traveled far enough to reach it. But I could not stop now, to await the light of day; for the most rapid motion I could make, was necessary to keep the blood from congealing in my veins. Hour after hour, I toiled along before the pitiless storm, that goaded me onward; and if, for a moment, I halted to rest my aching limbs, a still more furious blast would warn me of the danger.

"All that live-long night, I dragged my weary feet through the sleet-stiffened grass;—and when, at last, the day returned, gloomy, and overcast with clouds, I found myself the only living creature within the circle of the horizon;—for all of animal life, had long since sought the shelter of the distant timber. A dull, leaden sky hung threateningly above me; and on either hand stretched the cheerless, sleet-enveloped prairie;—while the relentless storm-god was yet abroad in all his fierceness.

"Still with my back to the cutting sleet, and my face to the south, I kept on. The hours of day passed heavily away; and still no prospect of a cessation of that wild tempest. The position of the sun could not be detected, for the leaden clouds spread over the sky, a uniformly impenetrable vail. My exhausted limbs could bear me but a little longer. At almost every step, I fell, measuring my length in the saturated and partially frozen grass. The pain of my fractured arm was excruciating in the extreme;—and as I fell with it under my body, I could hear the grating of the broken bones, upon each other, as they lacerated the flesh. I was about to yield to despair, and throw myself upon the ground, and await the grim messenger, who could not be far off. But one more look in the distance before me—and oh! joyful, hope-reviving sight!—directly before me a long stretch of heavy timber beckoned me onward. A shipwrecked mariner, clinging to his sinking plank, never greeted with more true joy the staunch vessel bearing down to his relief, than I did the cheering sight of that distant grove. A new vigor was imparted to my limbs; in that blissful moment I forgot all pain, or fatigue, and with a redoubled energy and strength, hastened toward the promised shelter. Under its kind protection from the freezing tempest, I could kindle a fire, and obtain the rest I so much required.

"As I approached the timber, I thought I heard sounds as of voices hailing in the distance; but the storm-wind filling my ears, I fancied it might be only an effect of my excitement,—the hallucination of my over-wrought brain. But no! I could not be mistaken; for there were horses within the grove;—not wild Mustangs, for they were evidently staked out, with lariets;—and from the southern side of the timber, I could see the smoke of fires. The place indeed was peopled; and with renewed energy and courage I hastened forward. As I came nearer, I found large numbers of horses; some hoppled out, others tethered at the ends of long leathern ropes, fastened to the trees;—and beyond,—deeper within the dark grove, what do I see! Certainly not the camp-fires of Mexican traders, as I had fondly hoped,—but the tall, cone-shaped, leathern tents of a numerous party of Indians! I had escaped death from the merciless storm upon the wide prairie, to meet it here, at the hands of a more relentless enemy! And with this discovery, another sudden destruction of my hope, returned with a crushing weight, all my former exhaustion and despair; and throwing myself recklessly upon the ground, within the edge of the timber, I closed my eyes, praying for the cold hand of death to end my bitter sufferings.

"I must have been many hours insensible, for when I opened my eyes I found myself alone, lying upon a soft pallet of buffalo robes, within an Indian lodge; while the storm had subsided, and the warm rays of the morning sun streamed slantingly in at the entrance. Instinctively, as it were, I raised my hand to the top of my head, to feel if my scalp remained intact. It was with a painful effort I raised myself into a sitting position, for I had probably lain some time upon the cold and damp ground where I had thrown myself, as I supposed and hoped, to die.

"A sharp pain in my arm now reminded me of my adventure with the buffaloes, and the train of subsequent events. My broken limb had been cared for, and was now covered with a warm fomentation of fragrant herbs. But whether I was a guest or a captive, I knew not. I had certainly been rescued from death, and kindly nursed; so, sometimes, were even the prisoners whom the Indians destined to a life of slavery.

"While I was debating this subject in my mind, a squaw entered the lodge, with a trencher of broth in her hands. Her broad, good-humored face lighted up with a smile of satisfaction as seeing my improved state, she knelt down by the side of my pallet, and held the savory mess to my mouth. I, indeed, needed the nourishing food, as nothing but the remaining water in my gourd had passed my lips since our morning meal, previous to crossing the Neuces.

"I would have drained the wooden dish; but after taking a few greedy swallows, the squaw drew it away, and, good-naturedly shaking her head, signified that I had had enough for that time.

"Presently the entrance to the left was darkened by a shadow, and a tall half-breed advanced, and in good English bid me a cheerful "Good morning," and, taking my hand, inquired how I felt. I was among friends, for I immediately recognized Jose Maria, the head chief of the Waccoes. I had met him but a few days before at San Antonio. His people had found me where I had fallen, and he had had me borne to his own lodge.

"In a few days I had recovered sufficiently to mount a horse, and with a few friendly Waccoes I returned to the spot where I had left my rifle, and, scaring the wolves from the remains of my poor steed, stripped the saddle and other rigging, which could not be replaced upon the prairie, and returned to the encampment. I remained with the Waccoes as long as they continued upon the buffalo range; and it was while I remained with these friendly Indians, that I learned all I know of hunter craft upon the wide prairies."

"And the Mexicans," we asked, "did they make no efforts to find you?"

"Yes," replied Walker. "I should be unjust not to give them credit for their friendly intentions. I met some of them afterwards, at San Felipe, and they all told the same story. Supposing I had killed a buffalo, and had stopped to secure a portion of it to pack into camp, they continued to busy themselves with hoppling and tying out their animals, (for the Mexican traders in those days traveled with large *atajos*—herds of cargo mules,) and preparing against the rapidly approaching norther, not doubting but that I would soon return.

"But as night came on, accompanied by the furious storm, and I did not make my appearance, they went in search of me; but in the darkness must have gone wide of the spot where I lay. The next day, however, they found my tracks, where I had broken the half-frozen grass, as I dragged my weary feet along. They could tell where I had fallen in my exhaustion—I had passed within three hundred yards of the grove where they had made the camp. They continued to track me to the rising ground where I had first discovered the grove; but here, seeing the smoke of the Indian camp in the timber, and my tracks tending directly towards them, they did not doubt I had fallen into their hands, and a further pursuit they deemed not only dangerous but useless. They, therefore, returned to their camp, confident that now my scalp was hanging in the smoke of an Indian lodge.

"And now, boys," concluded the old hunter, "as I have talked you nearly all to sleep, I will spread my own blankets, and so bid you all a good night, and pleasant dreams."

NOTHING is more odious than the face that smiles abroad, but flashes fury amid the caresses of a tender wife and children.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

NEWSDEALER.—We do not send papers by mail to places where there are well established news-offices. But when we have subscribers in any place, we do not discontinue, or refuse to let them renew their subscriptions, because somebody proposes to start a news-office in that vicinity, unless he can and does give us a satisfactory guaranty that such office will be permanently maintained; nor do we refuse mail subscriptions from places where purchasers are charged more than five cents a copy for the LEDGER, by newsdealers.

R. N.—As the newsdealer of your place charges seven cents for the LEDGER, we will mail it to you and your friends. The terms are $2 a year, or $3 for two copies. Canada subscribers have to add 26 cents a copy, for the American postage, which will make one copy cost $2,26 a year, and two copies $3,52 for a year. The Canadian postage you will have to pay yourselves.

MARION.—According to your statement the young man was an intruder, and therefore the "head of the family" had a perfect right to inform him that his presence was disagreeable.

ENTERPRISE.—So far as we know, you cannot get to Frazer River for an outlay less than two hundred dollars, and you would have to fare hard at that.

ELOISE.—It would not be improper for you to bow to "the minister" on meeting him in the street, even if you had never been introduced to him.

EXPERIMENTALIST.—We are not accomplished in the dyeing business, and therefore can give you no assistance in regard thereto.

BUFORD COURT HOUSE.—Your question is a painful one for anybody to decide in cool blood. We cannot bring our mind, in a dispassionate temper, to declare that a *deliberate* homicide, the result of a *settled and well-considered* purpose of vengeance, perpetrated upon a shrinking, cowardly villain, is an act of justice, or a *right* act, even though committed by a father to avenge the wrongs of a daughter. At the same time, we have no hesitation in saying that the father who committed such an act under such provocation, should have all the advantages which the frailties of our common nature entitle him to; he should not be judged hastily or uncharitably, nor by a common standard. The maddening nature of his own and his daughter's wrongs should be taken into the account, and the verdict of the community rendered only after the whole subject had been most maturely considered in the elevated spirit of true wisdom and charitableness.

ODD-FELLOW.—The agreements among the members of your lodge, and the agreements between your lodge and the grand lodge, are binding among yourselves so long as you are content to have them so, but no longer. They cannot be legally enforced. The courts will not recognize the authority of your officers, nor the authority of the grand lodge, to enforce the rules against refractory members, when such enforcement of the rules would interfere with the rights of property. Were the lodges of your order incorporated by law, the case would be different. The alienation of property and the adjudication of the rights of individuals in, to, or concerning property, are acts of sovereign power, which can only be performed by the State through constitutional channels, and by officers lawfully appointed.

INCENSED LOVER.—You had no right to *forbid* your companion's taking a ride in the balloon. That was a stretch of your authority as her lover. After you had thus attracted attention to her movements, it was perfectly natural for her to persist in making the ascent. No girl of proper spirit would submit to be treated like a child by her lover, in public. The probability is that you have not tarried long enough in Jericho. If you are over twenty-five years of age, your stupidity, or conceit, must be so firmly seated as to give your friends just cause for uneasiness on your account.

ABUSED WIFE.—You doubtless have just cause for *complaint* against your husband, but whether or not you have sufficient cause for a *divorce*, is quite another matter. Can you *prove* all the assertions you make? If you cannot, you cannot obtain a divorce. The fact that your husband has confessed his iniquities has nothing whatever to do with it. His confessions, admissions or statements cannot be used against him in an action for divorce. If he will help you to the obtaining of *proof* of his crimes, well and good; *that* would be of essential service, but his *declarations* amount to nothing.

SLANDERED.—It may be that you have been slandered, but, so far as we can understand the case from your statement, and such inferences as we feel justified in drawing, it is our opinion that you have not been wronged near so seriously as you seem to imagine. There are two sides to every story, or at least to every case, and if you would get somebody who is competent for the task to give you the other side of the case under consideration, you would find it greatly to your advantage to study it long enough to enable you to comprehend the matter in all its bearings.

K. G.—One of the first qualifications of a student of history, according to an eminent authority, is *utter disbelief*. We should modify this and say, that a student of history should be cautious about surrendering his convictions and forming opinions, and should always bear in mind that the author he is reading was only a human being, liable to err, susceptible of bias and prejudice, and almost certain to be seduced from the path of absolute truth by the fascination of some favorite theory, the establishment of which he considers essential to the world's welfare.

E. S. P.—The phrase *tete-a-tete* is pronounced *tait ah tait*, and literally means "head to head;" hence, it means a private conference between two persons. If you have ever seen a couple of lovers talking to each other across a small stand or table, with their heads close together, you have seen an exemplification of a *tete-a-tete* in its most admirable form. The phrase *au revoir* is pronounced *oh revwaur*, and means, freely and liberally translated, "good-bye till we meet again."

D. E. W. H.—Yes; a father would have a right to prevent, and could prevent, a son under twenty-one years of age from marrying against his (the father's) consent, if he could always "keep his eye on the young man." If, however, the latter should get out of his father's sight and control, he could get married, and then his father could do nothing to break up the match.

ELEANOR.—We do not wish to advise you as to what course you ought to pursue in your present embarrassments, or as to the determination of your future career and occupation. You might succeed as a writer, and you might not, and the same may be said of any public or professional career you might adopt.

LEONINE.—It may be that some men would prefer dashing, impudent, Lady Gay Spanker sort of women for wives, but we never yet saw a man who would make such a choice. Such women are liked as acquaintances; but when a man comes to choose a partner for life, feminine grace, amiability and modesty, are the qualities which he prefers.

YOUNG EMULATION.—Your "lines" are so intolerably bad that they have secured a reading. We perused them as curiosities; and, as advertisements say, "they richly repaid the trouble." It is our opinion that a more absurd mess could not be whipped into rhyme.

B. W. C.—We do not care to name "associations" or babies. If no member of your society is capable of furnishing you with a name, you had better postpone the organization thereof, until a member competent to christen the association can be found.

ATLANTIC CABLE.—The back numbers of the LEDGER containing the story of "BION, THE WANDERER," will cost 44 cents; those containing "KARMEL, THE SCOUT," will cost 48 cents

PHILANDER.—You must patiently wait for the young lady to explain the mystery. If she loves you as dearly as she professes to do, you will not have to wait long for the explanation.

A RATISMAN.—You ought to keep your promise and marry the girl, after what has occurred. If you do not, her father, or some other male relative, will probably chastise you in a very summary manner.

IRON CITY wants some of the LEDGER boys to tell him how much water a tank will hold, that is twelve feet in hight, ten feet in diameter, of circular form, and the same size from bottom to top.

GUS PITMAN.—The word "Psyche" is pronounced *sigh-key*, in two syllables, the accent on the first.

PENELOPE.—It is a sad and most pitiful thing for a wife and mother only seventeen years of age to be thus deserted by one for whom she deserted her father and mother, but it is not an uncommon nor an unnatural thing. You were under the greatest possible obligations to your parents, and yet you deserted them for a comparative stranger, and should not, therefore, be astonished at that stranger's following the example you set him. However, all that is past, and the thing now to be done is to repair the misfortunes that have overtaken you. The first thing you should do is, to write to your parents, confess your error and your cruel disobedience, ask their forgiveness therefor, state to them your present condition, and solicit the privilege of once more seeking the protection of the dear old home which you so foolishly abandoned. If you write such a letter as you *ought* to write, they will forgive you, and you can then return to them, with your babe, and by reflection and study, and the active performance of your duties, gain that knowledge and experience which will enable you to pass the remainder of your days in some degree of contentment, or at all events in material comfort and social peace.

MARIETTE.—Your plan for securing happiness was utterly futile. You might as well understand at once that there is but one class of persons to whom happiness is possible in this world, namely, those who have the capacity to understand, and who do understand, that human beings were sent into this world to do the things that their situation requires them to do, and who cheerfully accept life on these conditions, and unflinchingly do their duty, simply because it is their duty, without hoping or caring for any reward save the consciousness of having done, under God, the best that within them lies to fulfill the end of their being. When a man comes to this condition of heart and mind, *happiness is possible for him, and not before* and the same thing may be said of woman.

JULIA.—No girl ever gains anything by jealousy; and any exhibition of that evil passion is the surest means of alienating the affections of a lover. When a man's love begins to cool, and he begins to turn his attention to another, the only way for the "original sweetheart" to retain his affection is to make herself more attractive and fascinating than her new rival. She must then show all the goodness of her heart, all the excellence of her mind, and all the fascinations of her taste, manners, and personal attractions. If she permits herself to become cross, jealous, morose, and otherwise disagreeable, her lover will soon become disgusted and seek more and more the society of those who seek to make him comfortable. The same remarks will apply to a lover who becomes jealous of his sweetheart.

A GEORGIA GIRL.—When a friend fails to keep a social engagement, you should put the most charitable construction possible upon her conduct. She may have a plenty of good reasons for not having kept the engagement. Her own illness, the illness of some relative, or some other unavoidable detention, may have prevented her from making the visit as agreed upon. If you are a good-hearted and well-bred young lady, you will write your friend a cordial letter, express your regret at not receiving the expected visit, and inquire in the most respectful and sympathetic manner, whether she has been detained by any misfortune, etc., etc. Bad-hearted and vulgar people are very apt to fly in a passion and become abusive on such occasions; but decent people are never guilty of such a breach of good-nature and good manners.

E. L. S.—Fudge! Your wife undergoes more toil and wearing care in taking care of her three children, than all your "business" can impose upon you. That sick baby alone outweighs all your masculine botherations, and you ought to be ashamed of yourself for having attempted to find fault with your patient little wife, because she gets so tired that she cannot wait on you and your friends as though she were merely an upper-servant in your family. Why should she wait on your friends? Was that what you married her for? Some husbands seem to imagine that a wife should act the part of a landlady, and keep a hotel for the accommodation of a set of masculine "loafers" who are ill-bred enough to impose their presence upon her and her children.

TRUTH.—By no means. A man and wife cannot dissolve their union at their own will and pleasure. They can separate, one from the other, and not live together. They can go thousands of miles from each other, but the marriage bond binds them as tightly as ever; and neither of them can lawfully marry again, until a competent legal tribunal shall have annulled their marriage, or set one or the other of them free by a decree of divorce. Should the marriage be thus annulled and declared void, both could marry again. Should a divorce be granted to one, with liberty to both to re-marry, they could of course both lawfully marry again; but should the decree give but one of them privilege again to marry, the other would be condemned to a life of single blessedness.

AUGUSTUS.—Before you can "form a just estimate of Napoleon's character," you will have to read all the histories written of the events of his time, and the biographies, autobiographies, memoirs, and other works touching upon his career, and after you shall have read and compared all these, you will have to do an immense deal of thinking of the very hardest and most comprehensive kind. Napoleon's career and character form one of the greatest problems of the world's history.

SUOMORTE.—If you have no natural gift of eloquence you can never acquire it. There have been but a very few eloquent orators since the world began. You may become an able debater, a sound reasoner, a persuasive advocate, a subtle logician, or a flowery rhetorician, by dint of hard study and practice, but the eloquent orator does not come by study and practice. *He* must have a luminous mind, a heart of fire, and a noble soul full of zeal and daring for the truth.

ELIAS J. V.—The last time that Macready, the tragedian, was engaged to perform in New York, he did not play even one night. He was interrupted, and the performance was brought to a close by a disturbance which at last grew into the famous Astor Place riot. The play that had been selected, on that occasion, was Macbeth.

COMMON SENSE.—It is not probable that any one will disagree with you as to the desirableness of your taking, and of your friends taking, "a common-sense view of the difficulty;" but it is quite possible that there will be a difference of opinion among you as to whose view has that admirable quality in the most eminent degree.

L. L. L.—You had better ask your mother about exchanging daguerreotypes with the young man. As we know nothing about him, nor of your relations to him, we can give no opinion on the subject. According to your statement there certainly could be no harm in your *not* exchanging with him.

J. O. P.—The manner in which a man should commence a letter to a lady, would depend upon the degree of his intimacy with her. If he have any doubts as to his position, he should simply address her as "Madam," whether she be married or unmarried.

GEORGE.—Any "association" in America that claims to have been founded by Howard the philanthropist is a humbug and a swindle. Consult any physician in your neighborhood; the poorest one there is better than a far-off quack. Unless you get relief, you are doomed.

J. C. M.—There is probably very little choice between the service of the army and navy. Each man must choose according to his taste. Any honest employment in a civil capacity, on one's own hook, would be preferable for a man of energy and ability.

MENTOR.—According to your description of your treatment of your lover, instead of signing your letter "Mentor," you should write down your signature as *tormentor*. We do not blame him for getting vexed. You ought to "make up" with him on the most liberal terms.

ROB ROY.—You seem to be anxious to discover some method of doing a dishonest thing in an honest way. We do not care to aid you in such an enterprise. You had better bring your avarice under the control of your conscience, and keep it there.

FANNIE.—If you would "purify your blood" consult a physician, and follow his advice, in case your health is affected. If you are in good health, be sparing and delicate in your diet, take plenty of exercise, and keep good hours—going to bed and getting up early.

X. R.—You should have told us what quality and kind of hemp was required. There is American, Russian and Manilla hemp, and then each of these are subdivided into different qualities and kinds, varying in fineness, strength and value.

C. C. C.—Let your own conscience determine the matter for you. When a man feels that he is right—that the Omnipotent is on his side—he can afford to disregard the quibbles and fears of lukewarm acquaintances and faint-hearted friends.

JENNIE.—You are evidently a petty-minded creature and addicted to fault-finding. No wonder the beaux desert you. Strive to become amiable and generous, and you will soon perceive a difference in the behavior of the young men of your acquaintance.

G. H.—Yes. The guardian of a girl can bind her out until she becomes twenty-one years of age. The popular belief that a female attains her majority at the age of eighteen years, is without the slightest foundation, at least in this State.

DOLLIE.—We think that a gentleman who should be out walking with a lady would have just cause of offense, in case she should take the arm of another gentleman who happened to come up with them.

D.—If you are positively innocent of the crime, it might do to bring an action against your accuser for malicious prosecution. You, of course, best know what the facts are.

H.—It would not be improper or indelicate for a young lady to ask her lover for his daguerreotype. It would be natural for her to do so, and as proper as natural.

ANXIETY.—You had better get married at once, or at least as soon as the young lady will set the day. Marriage may cure the evil you complain of.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*